

IN THE
EYES
OF THE
EAST

MARJORIE
BARSTOW
GREENBIE

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Courtesy Canadian Pacific Railway

The harbour of Vancouver on an afternoon betwixt
winter and spring

IN THE EYES OF THE EAST

BY
MARJORIE BARSTOW GREENBIE

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS



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DEDICATION

Forgive me; dear, that I uncloset
These garden-gates of memory.
When there's romance that blooms and grows
So gay and fair and strange to see,
There's not a fence so tall and stout
That it can keep the whole world out.

The passer-by will snatch by stealth
A look and gossip as he goes;
The bandit breeze will filch the wealth
Of perfume in our hoarded rose;
And birds and bees and butterflies
Go up and down to advertise.

Our memories are confiscate.
There's nothing left for you and me
But to play host before the gate
To which the whole world holds the key,
And hope to save some private dream
In all this communist régime.

PREFACE

THIS record has grown from chapter to chapter in response to the question of the audience: "What next?" Beginning as a somewhat casually selected episode from my journey around the world, in a current periodical, it developed from month to month as entertainment for willing readers—till, lo, there was a book! At the same time various reporters' stories of my peregrinations had circulated in the press, and had been copied by weekly digests—till one great and enterprising newspaper syndicate capped the climax by turning the trip into a most gaudy love-story, and sending it, with appropriate illustrations, into every hamlet in America. The publicity thus given to a detail which I had treated rather lightly in my published account must be my excuse for enlarging on it in the book. At least I may hope that, in the popular imagination, my own version will supplant the newspaper story. If any further excuse is needed for thus trailing the romance of my own little life across the broad face of the world, I must urge that it is the necessary explanation of the chain of events narrated in the second half of the book, and, if I did not tell the truth, I should be hard put to it to find a plausible substitute. But, after all, what I have told is not what is private and personal to myself (for that remains inviolate). I have given the world only so much as corresponds to the oldest formula of romance in literature and so has a kind of universality. And I hope that the reader will read into my story throughout not the experience of a private individual at all but the symbol of his own dreams and hopes.

For the rest, I have tried to give as living a picture as I could of the great pageantry of life upon the highways of the white man's Orient—to present typical individuals among those who go back and forth upon the

borderline where the two great civilizations of the world are now coming together—to show the white man shaped and subdued to the environment of the East, and the life of the Oriental sometimes confused, sometimes shattered, but sometimes stimulated to wonderful new vitality by the mighty impact of the West. As one or another personality emerged from the changing throngs upon my path around the world, I have sketched him, swiftly and lightly. And I offer this collection of miniatures for what they are worth in the interpretation of the larger issues of Eastern life.

Yet I need hardly say that I have clung as strictly as possible to fact. The people in this book are all real people who still go up and down upon the highways of the world. Only in some cases I have introduced a deliberate, though transparent, confusion of non-essential detail, in order to provide any one who wishes to disclaim the portrait with an alibi. In some cases, too, I have used the dramatist's license, and have concentrated into brief episodes what was more widely scattered in time and space. But such liberties are comparatively rare, and, on the whole, my narrative is as close to fact as common courtesy and the art of the raconteur will permit. I have been under no temptation to invent, because the truth was always much more interesting than anything I could imagine. Yet, just because I was telling of unknown people and incidents that would offer no inspiration to the newspaper headline, I have adhered to one principle which seems necessary to raise such a record above triviality: *I have written only of facts and people who would be interesting if they were fictitious.* And so I have tried to put into my book not only the pageantry of the East, but a little of the common heart of humanity.

It remains only to acknowledge my indebtedness to two people who have made this story possible. To Karl E. Harriman I owe a special debt of gratitude for inspiring the original narrative and for providing me with my first audience, as well as for his kindly co-operation and enthusiasm throughout. To my hus-

band, Sydney Greenbie, I owe a debt less easy of definition—not only for valuable criticism in detail, but for constant stimulus to my own flagging impulse to write, and for the contagious earnestness and integrity of his own literary ideals, as well as for a world of help and sympathy to which no public announcement can be adequate.

MARJORIE BARSTOW GREENBIE.

GREENSBORO, VERMONT,
August 17, 1921.

PRELIMINARIES

OF the vast world of waters that lies between Vancouver and Shanghai, and the manners of men who travel de luxe upon those seas. I introduce the Bishop and the Bishop's incorrigible daughter.

Five o'clock in the harbour of Vancouver on an afternoon betwixt winter and spring. For here, on the shores of the northern Pacific, spring had already risen like an exhalation from the waters, sweet with the promise of cherry blossoms in Japan across the way, and scents from the far South Seas. Already the fresh green ran up to meet the snow upon the mountains, and a mist of young verdure seemed to drift and cling among the pines. But beyond the vast rampart of the Canadian Rockies winter still lay heavy upon the plains.

The mind of the traveller is superstitious. He likes some omen of wind and weather to speed him on his way. And so, as we steamed slowly out into the Pacific, bound by the swift northern route for Yokohama and Shanghai, the breath of balm that mingled with the coolness of the water was like an emanation of friendship from the face of the deep and turned my eyes with gladness to that mysterious horizon where West, at last, is East. Yet I suppose there is no more prosaic method of invading the Orient than that which fortune had marked out for my course. I was going first class on one of the greatest steamers on the Pacific for a tour upon the beaten highways of Japan and China, under the escort of a Bishop, the Bishop's Lady, and the Bishop's incorrigible daughter. Safely and sedately I was going forth,

and safely and sedately I might have returned. But I did not, and thereby hangs the tale.

For romance will burgeon and blossom in the heart of youth astray in the world, and, as the American shore turned cloudlike in our rear, and the pale wastes of the Pacific widened around us, my spirit was already stirring with presages of adventures whose fulfilment I could not yet foresee. Straight into the sun we steered. Then suddenly those wastes of sky and sea were as one light, and the waters rolled flaming away, as if there were no horizons any more and they might break at last upon the margins of some far cloud, or the uttermost bounds of ether. Only the gulls which had come to escort us out to sea seemed at home in that great splendour, and wheeled and circled betwixt gold and gold with the sunlight upon their wings. Standing upon the forward deck, too much a stranger to my shipmates as yet to mark their chatter around me more than the squeaking of the gulls, I felt for a moment like one who has slipped all earthly ties, and is afloat in pure space.

I thought of the "wild surmise" of those who first saw this new world of water, "silent upon a peak in Darien," and of the prayer of Drake, who, climbing "a great and goodlie tree" in the Isthmus to verify the fable of the liquid space beyond, had prayed that God would give him life and leave to sail once in a ship on that sea. And God heard him, as He has a way of hearing such prayers on the lips of Englishmen. Was not this journey of mine a heritage from his adventures, and this great British ship on which we were now so securely afloat only the last in a long line of vessels which had never ceased, from generation to generation, to take up Drake's challenge to Heaven and this masterless world of waters?

So I thought as I waited for the coming of the stars. For some one had told me that the great dipper, which is the guide of all sailors, would have that night a message for me, and its seven stars would write the seven letters of a word of familiar endearment. This romantic and imaginary tryst I was not allowed to carry out undisturbed, for the Bishop and the Bishop's Lady and the Bishop's incorrigible daughter descended to renew their acquaintance with the girl who had been committed to them for chaperonage and safe-keeping upon the high seas. Concerning the Bishop and the Bishop's Lady, I shall have more to say anon. He was a wise, gentle, and humorous soul, so much a Christian that one forgot all about it and thought of him as only perfectly a gentleman. She was a simple and loving woman, very up-to-date in costume but essentially the daughter of another age than ours. Her friends liked to call her "Lady," and that, perhaps, tells what there is to tell about her. Yet she was, I think, what most men would like their sweethearts to be after twenty-five years of marriage; and neither for her nor for her husband had the freshness and zest of love as yet gone by.

But the Incorrigible Daughter—there was the queen flapper of our day of flappers! Dorothy, at the age of seventeen, had already asserted her right—which she called her duty—to be her father's aid and comfort on his periodical exiles to the Orient. Not that she had any religion. She always professed that she had not, especially at moments when the profession was inopportune. She was adorned with none of the traditional Christian graces, neither with meekness nor silence nor chaste braided locks. She called bishops and other ecclesiastical personages by nicknames of her own creation, and established rapid flirtations with all nice young mis-

sionaries—married or single. She spied upon what she chose to call my “love-affairs,” and paraded them to my discomfiture. She collected my mail, and attached a complete romance to each letter, which she retailed with gusto to the missionaries. She always repeated my most foolish remarks to the Bishop. And when her sins drew down upon her a well-merited rebuke, she would remark with an air of serene condescension:

“Now, Dad, you don’t understand. Why, that’s this New Woman stuff I got from Marjorie.”

Yet, withal, she was a little thorough-bred, with the thorough-bred’s infallible instinct for the line which separates impertinence from vulgarity and teasing from unkindness—a creature of wind and sunshine and revivifying spring squalls, and the jolliest young pagan that ever trod on an episcopal toe.

So now, adroitly detaching herself and me from our elders, she whispered, as she exuberantly squeezed my arm, that she had picked out “just the man” for me. It was one of Dorothy’s beliefs that this journey of ours to Japan and China was to end in a double bridal for herself and me, with her father officiating. This being the case, she was naturally anxious to get on with the preliminaries. So, though we were not yet an hour out of sight of land, one hero was discovered and she hastened to make me acquainted with my fate.

“There he is,” she whispered, rapturously. He was a tall man, sombre, homely, and forbidding. I was not impressed.

“Oh,” said Dorothy, “he looks like that because he is a high-brow. You are a high-brow, and high-brows should always marry high-brows because no one else feels natural with them. Q. E. D., my dear.” And she proceeded with the details of the wedding.

Just then the high-brow opened his lips, in confidence to a squat, red man, who stood by him puffing smoke like a volcano: "‘God damme, my dear,’ sez I to the little dame, ‘this is the foist time—’" . . .

The assemblage at dinner an hour or so later gave us a chance of reviewing our impressions, and of being ourselves reviewed and classified. The life of a great Pacific liner is something unique in itself, and a presage of a certain elaboration of social life in the cosmopolitan foreign communities of the East, which has little place in America beneath the ranks of the plutocracy and the plutocracy’s intellectual retainers. It was amusing to see the awkwardness of some of the novices—mostly salesmen representing American firms—who appeared at dinner without tuxedos. No doubt they had come prepared to hob-nob with friendly cannibals, in the latest fashion of the Pacific, or at least to show the heathen natives a thing or two. And here they were, flabbergasted at the outset by promotion to amenities that “regular he-men” in America are still privileged to scorn. One or two simple souls from Kansas were impressed by the fact that a red-haired dame at the table near us, who looked like the Queen of the Visigoths, was addressed as “Lady Brandon,” and her husband as “Sir James.” Here was a real title, the kind you read about in books, and one could really sit next to it at dinner. Then, of course, there were the seasoned travellers *de luxe* upon these seas, easy, suave, dressed as if born in the dinner jacket, and anxious to determine what our status would be in the foreign settlements on the other side and to order their own behaviour accordingly.

As we took our seats, I was conscious of the convention which on these Pacific liners sharply separates the sheep from the goats—alias the missionaries from the

poker-players. There are, of course, a number of people who feel that they fall neither into the one category nor the other. They find unlimited whiskey and poker about as bad as unlimited psalms. But on board a Pacific liner there is no *via media*. Every one looks for a declaration of faith at the outset. If the condition of your soul is favourable, the missionaries surround you and close you in, and the rest of the ship avoids you thereafter as one too good for this world.

In our own case decision hung in the balance. Our general appearance was sufficiently fashionable to temper the hospitality of the church and encourage the worldly. The Bishop, appearing at dinner in his tuxedo, with no decoration of his calling about him, was a man to grace any saloon, and Lady yielded to no one on board in décolletage and manner. Hence, there ensued in our fellow passengers a little struggle between the worship of position and the dislike of Christianity, which are the two ruling passions of the lay communities of the Orient.

At dinner we were joined by a man who supplied all the odour of sanctity which our party lacked. He was very tall and broad, with superfluous rolls and protuberances of flesh all over his anatomy, one of those men whose soul is pretty well muffled in its fleshly tabernacle. Perhaps for that reason, he wore the extreme form of the clerical costume which his sect allowed him. He had an unctuous smile and a loud voice, and, as he entered the dining saloon, booming and beaming above that mighty expanse of flesh and black broadcloth, he was not an unimpressive figure. Many, indeed, took him for the Bishop, a mistake he never corrected then or afterwards. As the Bishop sank quietly and humorously into the rôle of mere private gentleman beside

him, his personality seemed to expand and grow sonorous, till he dominated the whole saloon.

Christian benevolence—or whatever he called it—flowed from him, in a mighty flood of compliment and pious appreciation addressed principally to the ladies of the party, but including the Bishop, too, in its condescension. But this was nothing to the emotion that the bill of fare aroused in him. He had been dining à la carte in war-times all across the continent; and such a table d'hôte, such a confusion and glory of food, not to be paid for piece-meal out of the cash in his pocket, but handed out as a free gift, wholesale,—this seemed to stir him to a passion mightier than love and religion. He ordered everything, and repeated the order for everything he liked. He kept all the boys who waited on the table scampering to and fro, till the orders of the rest of us were overwhelmed in the procession of dishes that came to him; and all the while his spirits rose and his tongue was unloosed and his benevolence reached out to inundate us all. His speech alternated between moral and religious sentiments, delivered with a kind of warm, sensuous enthusiasm, and sentimental stories for the benefit of the ladies, which would have been risqué, had not a wedding or at least a betrothal been always thoughtfully introduced somewhere in the course of them to save our blushes. He abounded, indeed, in stories of young love and its manifestations, after which he would insinuate, with his eye resting warmly on Dorothy or me, that our “time was coming.” Most of these he boomed out in so large a voice that the sum and substance of them reverberated from end to end of the saloon. Cosmopolitan as I had begun to fancy myself, I blushed like any flapper, and, when the Queen of the Visigoths, who had already showed some disposition

to be friendly, glanced at me, between amusement and pity, and whispered something to her husband, I thought a shipwreck would be a welcome interruption, or at least an immediate descent into the most private caverns of the sea.

This person, it seems, was to travel with us—at least till we could impose him on some one else in China. He was going out to see the missions at first hand, and garner enthusiasm at its source. For he was famous as a collector of money for missionary causes, and this trip had been presented to him by the Board of Missions, in gratitude for the past, and lively expectation of favours to come. Travelling with a Bishop involves social vicissitudes. Wistfully I thought of those days at the Canadian hotel, but just foregone, when, as part of the train of “His Grace,” we had been made to feel ourselves kin to the lords of the earth. But now petty clerks and salesmen all around us, whose only passport to social recognition was an expense account, were beginning to look with suspicion upon us because we belonged to the church. And here was this person to justify their expectations.

Only the Bishop was suave and humorous as ever. He was, by this time, used to being a Bishop, I suppose. After dinner, as we were standing in the dancing saloon, our new companion joined us.

“Brother Barnes,” said the Bishop, “are you dancing to-night?”

“Bishop,” said the good brother, giving an exhibition of what the old novelists mean by *drawing himself to his full height*, “Bishop, I don’t dance.”

“Don’t you?” said the Bishop, in a tone of pleasant surprise, ignoring the shocked expression on his face. “Well, it is never too late to learn, you know. Here,”

he added, indicating me, whose dislike of this brother in Christ was now, I am afraid, sufficiently obvious, "here is a nice lady to teach you."

I suppose Freud would say that the state in which I awoke next morning was due to a latent wish. For I was hopelessly sea-sick, and could make my appearance no more in company with our new friend. For four days and four nights I lay below and cursed the day I was born, except, of course, when I rejoiced to think what social complications I was missing. Dorothy visited me with hourly attentions and bulletins about life on ship-board, and full and dramatic accounts of the gastric achievements of our *bête noire*. Realizing what a good tonic this type of narrative is in cases of *mal de mer*, Dorothy would enumerate the number and quantity of dishes that he had consumed at dinner. Then she would tell how he had arisen and, with the marks of his debauch still upon him, had gone around and preached to the inhabitants of the smoking room on the evils of tobacco. They didn't feel the effects of it immediately, of course, he said, but they would in the long run; for the temple of our body is sacred, and we owe it to the Creator who gave it to us not to introduce anything that poisons and pollutes it.

After the fourth day, I was again on deck. Very bright and stirring it seemed, that vast and tossing body of water beneath the sun. There was something splendid in the way our ship smashed through the great waves, flinging the spray to the light, and crushing the water into foam. We were skirting the Arctic regions now, passing the long chain of islands into which the peninsula of Alaska disintegrates—and drawing so near at last that we could see the smoke from a volcano on one of them. At the one hundredth and eightieth me-

ridian we left one of the days of our week, without having any chance to sample its possibilities of joy or sorrow. We went to sleep on Tuesday night and awoke on Thursday morning. Thursday was a dead loss, too, for it took the whole of it to explain this phenomenon to Dorothy, as well as to show why the quickest route to Japan was a detour by way of the North Pole.

"But," I said, "it's all because the earth is round."

"Oh, that's a yarn I never did believe," said Dorothy, closing the demonstration with a yawn.

But for me this obvious illustration of something I had always taken on faith was re-assuring to the imagination. I felt like some Christian arriving in the New Jerusalem and finding that the streets are of gold after all. For there is, doubtless, a certain amount of hypocrisy in the way we are taught, in early youth, to glory in our knowledge of the spheroidicity of the earth, and feel vastly superior to the poor ignoramuses who lived before Columbus. For all practical purposes, the world is, for the most of us, flat, and we live in still green spaces of it beneath a moving sun. But out here on this great arc of waters, circled by the horizon and spanned by the swift sky, some glimmering sense of being on a great sphere swinging through space did come daily to my mind, and touch me with awe and a sense of illimitable grandeur. Often, too, I would speculate on the meaning of this tremendous sea. Were those astronomers right who say that it is the hole left in the cooling earth when the moon flew off into space, and took to a career of her own? I never saw the moon lift her bright head over the waters and walk up the heavens, serene and innocent, without wondering whether she was really a run-away from earth, who had slipped like a woman beneath the yoke of home, and chosen all space



Through the rain we saw straw raincoats like animated hay-
stacks, and paper umbrellas like gaudy flowers



The half-derisive welcome of the populace seemed the essence
of courtesy



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It was a delicate sea upon which we were launched—a sea
without substance or tangible reality

as her portion. I would think, too, of lands the Pacific washes through a length of ten thousand miles from the icebergs of the Arctic to the snowy cliffs of the Antarctic continent, and the thousands and thousands of islands that rest in its arms. How vast a world of waters it is, how virgin and reticent still, hiding the lives of its peoples away in its shining recesses, and holding them serene and apart from the strife of those lands that publish themselves as *the world*. Yet some day perhaps the Pacific may still be what the Mediterranean was in antiquity and the Atlantic in recent centuries—the centre and heart of the world, the watery plaza, as it were, on which all public life of the nations opens.

The remaining eight days of the voyage passed swiftly, in the bland content of the sea. I don't remember what I did with them—wasted them, most likely. I only recall that I learned ship tennis under the tutelage of some soft-spoken, homelike English folk attached to the party of Lady Brandon, and that Brother Barnes temporarily diverted his attention from the matrimonial future of Dorothy and me to the conjugal happiness of the Bishop. This he would celebrate in delicate little public eulogiums.

We were beginning to tease the Captain to tell us the exact day of landing, and to get just about as much satisfaction as such inquiries deserve, especially in war-times. One afternoon the soft hills and valleys of water over which the ship would swing so gracefully seemed to become mountain peaks and unfathomable abysses, and the waves swept upward as if to wash the edge of the low red sun. All night the ship shivered and tossed and groaned, but with dawn came peace like a quiet hand upon the waters. All day long we slipped over a dim, blue summer sea, haunted and teased by the unseen

presence of land. And, as night fell in grey mist upon the water, we thought we saw casual lights and sometimes a far, ghostly glow. Next morning we awoke in the harbour of Yokohama.

II

It is well not to believe all one hears about Japan. It is still better not to believe all one sees. For, if you come to Japan as a well-meaning stranger, unsophisticated in the ways of this flowery empire, without warning from California or China, you will be for some months under enchantment, and will, no doubt, say things which will furnish the *Japan Chronicle* with food for editorial mirth for a week. So have we all done in our time. Lafcadio Hearn started the fashion, and every one since, from bankers to débutantes, has been in the mode. No doubt there was a time when such rapture was harmless—was even, perhaps, a salutary shock to the self-complacent West. But that time has now gone by. The most innocent taste for cherry-blossoms carries bitterness into the heart of Cathay, and mockery to all the shores of the Pacific.

Yet surely it is not all “propaganda”—that charm which addles the wits of the guest in Nippon. There is illusion in the very atmosphere of Japan, a conspiracy of earth and sky and water to flatter the eye and turn it from unseemly things. Seen through a flash of rain, a mist in the morning, a sunshine which is like fine dust in the eyes, the solid land melts into the stuff that dreams are made of, becomes a world of shadow, and silhouette, and casual flame. There is illusion, too, in the mere accident of the physical littleness of the people, reducing human actions to elfin proportions, subtly dis-

counting and idealizing them in the eyes of men to whom Nature gave weight and inches, as one discounts and idealizes the doings of children. There is illusion, too, in the daily and common use of things dedicated in our minds to intimate, festive, or esoteric functions. A kimono, a wandering paper lantern by night, a bronze Buddha in a forest place, will transform the familiar emotions of common humanity, and give to the most prosaic events the colours of the footlights.

For myself, I confess that I never wholly recovered from this enchantment. The first brief glimpse between Yokohama and Nagasaki, en route to Shanghai, was lovely with the light of blossoms and the tenderest spring sunshine. Even when I returned from China for a longer sojourn, with a thousand accusations ringing in my ears and memories of dusty grandeur which nothing Japanese can rival, I seemed to walk back into fairy-land. And when, in the late summer, I climbed Fujiyama by night and saw the dawn from its summit, I climbed into the heart of a dream and carried away the hope and the vision which come, perhaps, only once in a life-time. Though the author of *Japan: Real and Imaginary* now assures me that my Japan is mostly imaginary, his own part in that great deception is now, I suppose, sufficiently obvious to all the world.

Be that as it may, certainly on that first morning in the harbour of Yokohama, Japan emerged delicately from the seas. The rain was falling in what seemed more a downpour of mist than water, and through it I saw a terraced green landscape, and people in straw raincoats who moved like animated haystacks, and paper umbrellas of red and blue and yellow which bloomed out of the rain like great gaudy flowers. Yet so remote and quiet was it all behind that veil of falling

water, that the little yellow men in brass-coloured rain-coats who stepped out of the rain, glittering and dripping, to inquire about our ancestors and question our right to enter Japan, seemed to come from some dim void and to have no earthly place and habitation. So before I had rightly recovered from the long dream of the sea, I awoke to find myself in a rickshaw drawn by a lively little fellow in a great bowl-shaped hat, who moved as if his feet were made of rubber.

The rain had ceased now and all the land was steaming. I looked around me with delight. Though Yokohama is only a hybrid city, no less Occidental than Oriental, and draws its life rather from the great ships that call here than from any native energy, my eye readily discounted its western buildings and small pretentious shops to rest with pleasure upon some little grey house with its tiny rocky garden, and small twisted trees, or a rosy blur of cherry blossoms, or a red maple that burned in the mist. A group of girls with architectural coiffures stopped to point at us, and titter at our complexions and costumes. A band of schoolboys in speckled kimonos, rosy and smiling, paused in our path, and, moved by some inexplicable impulse, saluted all together, awkwardly like mechanical dolls. True, the cherry blossoms, clinging wetly to their coarse brown twigs, looked like pink tulle costumes of ballet girls caught in the rain, and the children, as Dorothy said, had "most awful rummy noses"; but I had come to be delighted, and delighted I was. The half derisive welcome of the populace had to my ignorance the very essence of courtesy; and when out of the fogs crept a little green trolley car and ambled down the street, it was as marvellous in that setting as a green dragon with purple eyes.

At Yokohama the great steamers commonly deposit their passengers for an overland jaunt, and pick them up on the opposite coast, at Kobe or Nagasaki. So, though our immediate destination was Shanghai, and we were not to see Japan in detail till we had traversed China from Foochow to Peking, the next two days were spent in an overland flight from Yokohama to Kobe. For hours we slipped over the rice fields, which make so quaint a patterning upon the terraced hills, resembling brocade as our rectangular fields resemble patch-work. And the little grey houses embowered in trees and sometimes cherishing whole gardens among the thatch on their roofs, and the kiddies in kimonos of scarlet and yellow, and the girls beneath their parasols, and the boys in the streams waist high, angling for eels, and the twinkling gold of the mustard fields, and spring-time blossoming of plum and cherry were all at that time the authentic stuff of romance. After some hours we came out into wilder country, where we whirled in and out of smoky tunnels, and dashed across bridges that spanned plunging streams and flowery gorges, while all around us the mountains formed and melted in the sky like clouds. Then Fujiyama emerged—a delicate, majestic, and lonely form. And, seeing how it stands with no clutter of foothills around its base, no confusion and rivalry of lesser peaks, a sheer ascent from sea to sky, I thought I had never seen a mountain so beautiful—for it was even more beautiful in my eyes than the mightier cone of Popocatepetl or the starry heights of Orizaba. So I thought then, but I did not know that one day it would mean something more to me than beauty, and all the memories of this casual journey around the world, and perhaps even of my life itself, would focus in the dawn upon its summit.

All afternoon we slipped along the sea, where the crooked pine trees were silhouetted dark against the silvery light, and the little boats played upon the water like birds. Kyoto passed in a galaxy of lights at sunset, without prophecy of the days when it would be, for a time, my home, and in the darkness we were dropped in Kobe. Next day we were out again upon the waters bound for the shores of China by way of the Inland Sea.

It was a delicate sea on which we were launched, a sea without substance or tangible reality, where the islands seemed but drifts of cloud, and the waters were liquid light and moving shadow. Over it all shimmered the infinite tender blue which, in this atmosphere of misty Japan, is neither veritable sky nor pure light. It is only a kind of disembodied soul of light, the ghost and lovely memory of what elsewhere is real. So we sailed on and on, lost in dreams and shining appearances. And when darkness drifted to us over the quiet waters, and all the waves were alight with little red fires on island shores, or signals of shadowy sampans adrift in the night, some reservoir of tender and melancholy sentiment seemed to open in every heart on board. All over the decks there were whispering couples, and the lights gleamed wanly on interlocked hands. I walked around the deck with Dorothy, who was moved by the starlight and the pensive dark to tell me what she thought of "love." She didn't think much of it, unless it was "free love"—the precocious infant!—at which point the discussion was suddenly ended by the voice of the Bishop speaking to us from the shadows.

"Dorothy," he said, "you are a nut."

But the Bishop himself did not escape the infection. We came upon him later standing by the rail. His

arm was around Lady's waist, and, as she tried to draw away, afraid, apparently, of public notice, he was saying in teasing accents: "But don't you know, dear, you are just like the Devil in the old hymn, *tempting, luring, goading into sin.*"

Just then there was the rush of an oncoming presence in the darkness, and a great mass of humanity bore down upon them, booming. "Well, well, well," cried Brother Barnes. "Sweethearts still! Now I call that *beautiful.*"

At Nagasaki an army of sturdy girl coal-heavers stoked our ship, passing the baskets of coal from hand to hand like buckets of water in the old-fashioned fire-drill. Thus provisioned, we steamed out again into the sunset, and awoke on the dull waters of the Yellow Sea. It is strange that seas, too, have their physiognomy of homeliness or grace, and when one exchanges the waters along the Japanese coasts for the sea that is the vestibule of China, it is like exchanging the society of a capricious, pretty girl for a drab house-wife. The waters are muddy and yellow, and they move heavily and discolour all reflection of light. The skies hang low, and, at the moment of our passing, were of a uniform sullen grey, quite different from the sun-pierced April mists of the shores we had just left behind.

Two days across the Yellow Sea brought us within sight of the low green shores of China on Sunday morning. They were blotted with rain, and against the marshy green the waves were breaking in thick, ugly foam. Here we abandoned the ship, and sped up the Yangtse in a launch. As we entered the mouth of the river, I felt, with a home-sick start, that this was not China at all, but some enterprising town washed by the pale floods of the Mississippi; for I saw only the bare

red walls of Shanghai ware-houses, and the spire of a Christian church. Where were the curly roofs and demon haunts of China? Some junks passed us on the river. They had odd, weather-beaten sails of straw, and were painted with eyes whose unwinking watch might scare away the devils. They were reassuring.

As we drew nearer to Shanghai, the fact that this was an alien land was borne in upon me with a certain sinister implication. On the Bund I saw soldiers in khaki drilling.

"They are British and American volunteers, who are prepared to defend the foreign concessions in case of an uprising among the Chinese," said the Bishop.

Drawing near to the dock, I distinguished, among the ragamuffin hordes waiting to apply for jobs as coolies, certain great and stately figures, in dark blue uniforms and huge red turbans. They are the Sikh police imported from India by the British to guard the white men. Noble looking creatures they are—six feet tall, and proud of mien, with regular black features—and they bear themselves like Sultans.

Looking out upon them, through the hub-bub and the down-pour of landing, the one thing to delight the eye on all those ugly docks, I remarked to Dorothy, "That reminds me—I am going to India before I see New York again!"

Dorothy received this announcement calmly. "Good luck to you, my dear. I may go with you."

At that time all this was wildest fancy. Our return passage was already engaged for September, from one of the ports of Japan.

"Might be your honey-moon," added Dorothy.

While she was elaborating this roseate theme, we were suddenly dumped upon the roaring, dirty docks of

Shanghai in the cold, blinding rain. That landing was the negation of all dreams of the Orient. There was neither colour, charm, nor interest—only great ugly red brick buildings, an uproar of uncouth voices, and a concentrated essence of evil smells. While we were struggling through the Customs with our baggage, I heard a little conversation between the Bishop and Brother Barnes. The Bishop had put upon the good brother a fair share of the details of landing. Brother Barnes demurred; he fidgeted; he looked at his watch. Finally he suggested, "Bishop, have you noticed that it is half-past ten?"

"Yes," said the Bishop.

Dead silence. Brother Barnes spoke again, with the air of one supported through an unpopular performance by a good conscience.

"It is time for divine service, Bishop."

"Yes," said the Bishop.

"I think I must be excused, Bishop. It is something I never miss."

"Business before pleasure, Brother Barnes," said the Bishop coolly, proceeding with the details of landing.

As we rode off in battered rickshaws drawn by dirty, ragged, howling coolies, Shanghai seemed a nondescript town, scarcely more Chinese than San Francisco, for it is a British city owned, inhabited, and governed by British, with some American and French co-operation. Under the deluge of rain, its solid grey houses, trimmed in red brick, looked cold and dismal.

Sitting disconsolately in a dank and mildewed room, furnished with a hair-cloth sofa, a marble-topped table, and Webster's Dictionary and the Holy Bible in a glass book-case, we told the Bishop what we thought of the Orient. He explained that we had not yet seen China.

In the days when Shanghai was China, it was only a collection of fishing huts, beside the Whangpo River. But the British saw what a place it might be for the meeting of the great ships they planned to set afloat on these seas, and so they had acquired the land and built upon it, till it was now the great commercial metropolis of the East, a place of docks and ware-houses, and brick walls and shaded avenues of residence which we had not yet seen.

To this exposition Dorothy listened in gloomy silence. "Well, Dad," she said. "If there is a real China, lead us to it."

"I will," said the Bishop, and the manner and goal of the leading is shown forth in the pages that follow.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I	GOING DOWN THE PIRATE COAST . . .	3
II	I BECOME A WHITE WONDER . . .	14
III	HAVOC AMONG THE ANCESTORS . . .	28
IV	A PIOUS INTERLUDE	34
V	THE HERITAGE OF NOAH	39
VI	THE GHOST OF THE TEMPLE	48
VII	INFANT CASUALTIES	54
VIII	A GORY CONCLUSION	60
IX	AN ALUMNÆ REUNION	69
X	CINDERELLA OF THE BAMBOOS	80
XI	OUTLAW BRIDES	86
XII	HEART'S BITTERNESS	99
XIII	HIS AMERICAN MARRIAGE	108
XIV	THE RESCUE OF LITTLE MUM	116
XV	THE COURTS OF KUBLA KHAN	126
XVI	THE CHAPERONAGE OF JACOB WANG	141
XVII	"MADAME, I AM A DETECTIVE"	147
XVIII	PRINCE AND PAUPER	153
XIX	A CHAPTER OF LOVE-AFFAIRS	158
XX	THE GOLD-DIGGER	165
XXI	THE BISHOP TAKES A HOLIDAY	172
XXII	THE GION MATSURI	179
XXIII	FOOTPATHS IN THE SACRED MOUNTAINS	185
XXIV	AN UNINVITED GUEST OF THE MIKADO	193
XXV	PILGRIMS AMONG THE STARS	206
XXVI	A PERSONAL EPILOGUE	212

CHAPTER		PAGE
XXVII	PERCY, THE PLUTOCRAT	217
XXVIII	THE M. D. DIVISION OF THE BUREAU OF LABOR	230
XXIX	BACK TO THE PRIMITIVE	235
XXX	EX-HEAD-HUNTERS	240
XXXI	THE PYGMIES	244
XXXII	AT THE THRESHOLD OF INDIA . . .	249
XXXIII	THE RUBBER KING	255
XXXIV	ON THE ROAD TO MANDALAY . . .	260
XXXV	WHERE EVE IS THE GENTLEMAN . .	267
XXXVI	CARUSO	275
XXXVII	PEACE	287
XXXVIII	LADIES OF THE ZENANA	294
XXXIX	A GUEST OF TAGORE AT SHANTINIKE- TAN	300
XL	CHOTA HAZRI	312
XLI	UNDER THE BUDDHA TREE	317
XLII	THE LOTUS OF THE WORLD	332
XLIII	MEMORIALS OF OLD BLOODSHED . .	338
XLIV	THE LAND OF THE GREAT MOGUL . .	348
XLV	OLD LOVE AND MODERN COMEDY . .	359
XLVI	LADDIE	369
XLVII	SUSPENSE	376
XLVIII	SCANDALS	381
XLIX	AT THE GATES OF THE FAR EAST . .	392
L	"PEACE ON EARTH; GOOD WILL TO MEN"	400
LI	THE ROAD TO THE ALHAMBRA . . .	410
LII	SHIPWRECKED	416

ILLUSTRATIONS

The harbour of Vancouver on an afternoon betwixt winter and spring	<i>Frontispiece</i>
	PAGE
Through the rain we saw straw raincoats like animated hay-stacks, and paper umbrellas like gaudy flowers	xx
The half-derisive welcome of the populace seemed the essence of courtesy	xx
It was a delicate sea upon which we were launched—a sea without substance or tangible reality	xxi
A frowsy lot they were—all except the women	18
“Must be a strange land,” said a vivacious young thing, “where women wear skirts”	18
“Is she married?” I wondered, looking at a lovely, satiny yellow face	19
These, it seemed, were evidences of her husband’s love . . .	19
The ancestors were not having it all their own way	30
Thither, by all the paths of the rice fields, the people were running	30
The tiny tots basked, like kittens, in the sunshine of the mission	31
So the Bishop went his way, distributing his simple gift of peace even in the red courts of Confucian temples . . .	31
Inn-yard, Peking	46
Avenue leading to Ming Tombs	47
The mother of the bulbous babe indicated that <i>there</i> was a subject worthy of my camera	82
She seemed to remember that life was not always like this . .	82
Patrician girls learned English and foreign manners through the medium of Shakespeare	83
The slum children looked upon the fair mandarin daughters with unconscious cynicism	83
Tea-gardens, Soo-Chow	104
The last great drama of the Empire is not yet played out . .	105
It seemed scarcely credible that, out of that legendary past, a living princess could step into one’s presence	128
A pretty young woman, vivacious and chic, and very much a creature of these times	128
In the sunshine that falls so quietly among the old ducal courts of the British legation, there is no memory of smoke and fire	129

	PAGE
The Temple of Heaven, Peking	144
Hoang Lu Gate, Temple of Confucius, Peking	144
A suburb of Seoul, City Gate in distance	145
Korean Court dancing girl and servant	145
Typical old Korean swell	145
From hill to hill we travelled and from sacred grove to sacred grove	176
The festival begins with the annual début of the God in human society	176
The temporal and spatial location of the main pageant remained a mystery	177
How girls read and study	186
It was a day of mists which soon gave place to warm rain	187
In honor of the young princes the population had turned out to clean up the road	187
A small boy, under an orange-coloured umbrella, began to sing, "Nearer, my God, to Thee"	194
Small, impassive faces filled up the space beyond the platform	194
I stepped off into the ancient and mossy peace of Nara	195
The sweetest inhabitants of Nara are the wild deer	195
Beneath the towering branches that make so rich a gloom against the sun, blazes the scarlet temple where a Shinto priestess will dance	200
Many gods and ghosts there are who call this home	200
There was not the sombre magnificence of the Buddhist interiors	201
Fabulous tales of the ways of the white man in the presence of a lady had gone abroad	208
There was not one who would miss a good chance for observation	208
Fujiyama reflected in Lake Hakone	209
In the British legation in Peking the scars of the Boxer uprising are now healed with grass and flowers	232
These little brown women had the grace and naturalness of wild animals	232
Here was a chance to penetrate the charming mystery behind the vine-covered veranda	233
My mind reached out to the wilder nooks and crannies of the island of Luzon	233
A naked little jungle boy emerged and said "Hello"	246
The Igorrotes are an able tribe with a distinguished history as head-hunters	246
The Igorrotes have an unseemly habit of dining on dogs	247

	PAGE
She was enjoying her first lesson in co-education	247
Out of the jungle lean-to swarmed the pygmy people	252
There were miniature mothers and the tiniest babes I ever saw	252
I made some research into social conditions in the cosmopolitan community of Singapore	253
We kept passing majestic, turbaned figures, like ghosts out of some old Bible	253
I ascended through the golden gates into the heart of that temple world	264
The carved and gilded shrines were delicate as lace embroidered with gems	264
The bronze monks walked by twos and threes within the temple courts	265
Amidst the flowers and candles of the pagoda, he caught the flirtatious glance of a dainty, saffron maid	265
She had heard the manlike wisdom and witnessed the manlike freedom of the genuinely Christian girls	296
Only an Anglo-Saxon people could make such an ugly city	297
Fresh and home-like they seemed to us, those bright harvest fields	340
This agricultural efficiency was to us the most interesting thing about Allahabad	340
The Palace of the Peacock Throne at Delhi	341
We climbed one of the minarets and saw the city spread out before us like a map	350
Street scene in Delhi	351
Standing so delicate and white against the blazing blue of the sky	364
Afterward we wandered through the palaces where that queen had lived	365
The solemn figure of the Bedouin lifts up his hands in prayer to Allah	406
Once it was a granary of the Roman Empire	407
A town decorated by a river that coiled and sparkled like a silver ribbon dropped from on high	412
The land bore about it an indescribable air of melancholy romance	413

BOOK ONE

IN THE EYES OF THE EAST

CHAPTER I

GOING DOWN THE PIRATE COAST

THE imagination of youth has a predilection for rogues of one sort or another. Talk of a pirate or a bandit, and where is there a good red-blooded imagination under forty-five that won't thrill? So it happened that, when the Bishop proposed that we make our real *début* in China, by way of Foochow, some hundreds of miles south of Shanghai on the China coast, our imagination immediately responded with joyous memories of the whole literature of roguery. For there were pirates, en route, said Dorothy. One might enjoy social intercourse with them all up and down the coast, and the deeds that they did were mostly deliciously dark.

The Bishop, however, was sceptical. His mind dwelt on more prosaic horrors. "I can't positively promise you a pirate," said he. "Won't a bandit or a blue tiger do?"

"Lead on, old dear," said Dorothy. "But really, you know, we do prefer pirates."

"I suppose I ought not to take you," continued the Bishop thoughtfully. "There's a kind of revolution in South China. They won't accept the Peking government, you know, and express their feelings every now and then by shooting."

Dorothy's eyes sparkled. "Oh, Marjorie's revolution proof. She's lived in Mexico. And if we can't be captured by a pirate, I should think a revolution would be a rather nice little show."

Just then the agent of the South China Merchant line was announced. He had come to make the last arrangements for our passage to Foochow on his little vessel. As Dorothy whirled me rapturously away to make suitable preparations for our demise at the hands of the pirate, the Bishop's voice trailed after us in one last word of warning:

"Oh, yes, and there are lepers, you know."

The province of Fukien, which we had picked out for our operations, is off the main line of tourist travel. The Bishop was attracted thither by accounts of a remarkable campaign among the villages conducted entirely by a troupe of Chinese evangelists, and by plans for a great union Christian university at Foochow. But few visitors to the Far East find so much reason to brave the peculiar terrors of the China Sea, whose dizzy yellow waters lie between Shanghai and Foochow. The coasts are lonely, too, and pirates not unknown, though, to passengers on the British trading vessels, they are mostly matters for speculation rather than for fear. Yet Fukien, with its terraced hills and semi-tropical valleys, is one of the loveliest and most ancient provinces of China, and the seat of an enterprising sea-faring folk who would comprise an excellent navy were money in China as cheap as men. Though, of all the various sections of China which have found favour in Japanese eyes, Fukien is perhaps the most coveted, and has been and will probably be more and more a pawn in the manœuvres of the Far East, its simple village life is as yet untouched by railroads and telegraphs and post-

offices which the ambitious lords of the Orient still hope to bestow upon it.

In the direction of Fukien we set forth, with hardly a preliminary glance at Shanghai—the Bishop and Lady, and Dorothy and I. Brother Barnes was already launched on a spree of exhortations and religious services, and was living in a state of holy rapture. It was a little bark that was to stand between us and the pirates, and it carried no other white passengers. The Chinese in possession of the best cabins were summarily dispossessed by the steward—himself a Chinese, of course—on the ground that we were top-side people, and the ship was at our service. But we didn't take as kindly to those cabins as such attentions deserved, and mostly ate and slept on the little deck aloft, sheltered by canvas from the light rains and white sun. It was a lonely trip. After the wide brown wastes of the mouth of the Yangste had given place to the dancing sea, we saw not a junk nor a sail. But sometimes we passed by islands that were covered with grass as with a soft down, and inhabited by wild birds and fisher folk. Yet often they were but solitary rocks that vibrated all day long to the beating of the waters.

As we slipped southward through flying rains and flashes of sunshine, Dorothy extracted tales of the pirates from the British skipper, a weather-beaten old reprobate who had some difficulty in making a suitable selection from his vocabulary for the benefit of ladies and bishops. Most of his stories dated back some decades to the days when sailing vessels carried the trade that now travels under steam, and were a fair prey to pirate junks which, to this day, know nothing of coal and engines. He told about the gentlemanly free-booters who, having robbed some Americans, taking their vessel

and all their provisions, invited their victims to a good breakfast on their own stores before setting them adrift in a tiny boat. There was another Chinese pirate who stole an Englishman's watch, among other things, and later called on him on shore to find out how to wind it. But there was also a due proportion of drowning and murders among the exploits of these high-handed celestials.

He also told the story of Foochow, and why it is tucked away some thirty miles up the river Ming, instead of being on the sea-coast. Once there was a prosperous city on the coast, where even now one may see the pirate beacon that warns land lubbers of robbers by sea. This city the pirates attacked and invested for many days. At last the food within the walls was all eaten,—and even the animals, the water-buffalo, the ducks, and the mangy dogs. Nothing remained but a little rice.

Then some one had a daring thought. He suggested that they boil the rice and throw it into the ditches, which served as open sewers for the town, so that, when the pirates should see the boiled rice pouring out of the city with the rest of the refuse, they might say:

“How much food these people must have, if they can throw away rice like that! If we are going to wait till we can starve them out, we shall all grow old, and die, and become ancestors, while they continue to feast and defy us. Let's look for a hungrier city, or maybe the junk of a rich merchant coming down from the North.”

This was a doubtful scheme, but the people, being at their wits' ends, determined to try it. Sure enough! When the pirates saw the rice flowing out of the city with the sewage, they put up their quadrangular sails, and turned their curly prows out to sea, and bade fair to be seen no more.

Then there was great rejoicing. All the gates of the city were thrown open, and the people went in a long procession to the scarlet temple to thank all the gods and goddesses and the green-tailed dragons for delivering them from the pirates. Just at that moment, when all the deities were listening benignly, with that "please-don't-mention-it" air that Chinese gods have when they are good-natured, the pirates swooped down upon the city again, rushed in at every open gate, and, falling on the worshippers at the feet of the gods, dyed the scarlet temple more scarlet still with the blood of all the kneeling ones. Every one died at the knees of the gods that dreadful day, except only the little yellow children, who were borne away to be sold as slaves. But the golden deities never stopped smiling at all. They continued to look down complacently on the corpses piled round them, and their smile said as plainly as before, "Please don't mention it."

So the old skipper told the tale, not in language so literary perhaps, but with all the touches of drama and colour; for he didn't have much use for prayers of any description, this skipper, and he believed, with Confucius, that the less said about the gods the better.

"And are there really pirates still?" asked Dorothy, glancing out fearfully across the grey sea.

"Sure thing," said he. "Same as there ever was—all along this coast and up the rivers, too. They can't get us, because we go under steam, and they're just junks, you know, with sails. But once you're so foolish as to go by oars and canvas, you'd better look out, ma'am."

He added, however, that when it came to real piracy none of these Chinks had it on some of his own friends—enterprising gentlemen of white skin and citizens of New York or London, whom he used to know in the

good old days before civilization had tamed these seas. They would fit out a little ship and start on a gay career around the world, picking up the contents of native boats bearing silks and jewels and spices, and sometimes making away with a rich little town or two and distributing all human cargo to the fishes. When they were well laden, they would return to London or New York, sell the booty, and live like gentlemen to the end of their days. Among these fine old sea-dogs, there was one Captain Barstow from Providence.

"Same name as you, ma'am," he said, turning politely to me. "Probably a relative."

So we discoursed as the islands passed in cloudlike procession. But the third day we awoke to find the ocean reeling. Smooth as glass it seemed, without ripple or wave, but the ship swung skyward, too and fro and back and forth, as if all the world were rocking. Still and breathless the sunshine burned on the waters in a damp, hot, noxious mist of light. Months later when I was shipwrecked on the Atlantic to the tune of icy winds about the mast, and a roar of cold seas, I think I suffered less than I did under this enchantment of heat and dizzy calm, this feverish delirium of water. Sick and helpless we lay in our bunks—all except Dorothy. But Dorothy was as impervious to sea-sickness as she was to pious influences. Clear and mocking, her laugh rang out.

"Dorothy," said the Bishop feebly from the cabin next to mine. "Is that you laughing?"

"Yes, Father," said Dorothy.

"Well," said the Bishop, "any one who can laugh like that on Sunday morning under circumstances like these hasn't got any religion."

Next morning we awoke to a sweeter dawn. Our ship

was slipping softly up one of the most beautiful rivers I have ever seen in the shell pink light of early morning. Beyond the waters on either side were rocky shores and sweeps of verdant hillside, which cherished miniature villages and sometimes a pagoda or other winged structure, with up-curved aspiring eaves. There was the caress of the tropics in the air, and the luxuriance of tropic green upon the mountains, freshened at that hour with the coolness of dew undried and the breath of morning winds that were not yet saturate with sunshine. This was the Ming River, and we were drawing near to Foochow, so near in fact that we could see where it clung in terraces to the side of a hill. Ships like ours commonly do not dock at Foochow. They stop short at a place called Pagoda Anchorage, and transfer their passengers to Chinese junks, which proceed over shallower waters to the city.

So at Pagoda Anchorage we stopped, and there the peace of the dawn-lit morning departed with a shriek. Blue sampans rushed out from the shore with howling mobs on board, darkening the water and churning it into foam, and crashing into the ship in a wild contest to deliver us from our baggage. In the midst of the confusion a brown and cheerful young missionary named Brace came alongside in a house-boat laden with food, sedan chairs, bedding, and coolies. He and his sunburned friendly wife were going to a village in the interior of the province. I offered myself as a first-class passenger. The Bishop gave me a good recommendation, said I was a respectable character and did not mind being captured by a pirate or eaten by a tiger, but that I drew the line at dying of smallpox. He added that, if I was so unfortunate as to miss a romantic demise, he would pick me up again at Hingwha, a city about

eighty miles away, where there was a flourishing mission. So I transferred myself to the house-boat, and with some farewell instructions from Dorothy about the etiquette of social intercourse with pirates, bandits, and tigers, we pushed off over the twinkling waters, into a world as strange and beautiful to me as the sea of dew on which Wynken, Blynken, and Nod went adventuring.

Lightly our sails spread to the wind, and the city drifted from sight. Beyond the environs of Foochow, which is a treaty port, and in which the lives of foreigners are under the protection of their own flags and certain common means of communication and defence, we were outside of the confines of settled law and order. South China had never given allegiance to the government in Peking, which called itself republican, and a kind of sporadic warfare was raging all up and down the country between northern and southern soldiers. Meanwhile the people shifted as best they might under local magistrates of one sort or another.

But just as Satan can clothe himself as an angel of light, so anarchy, I have discovered, can wear a countenance of exquisite peace. All day long we slipped by shores of pastoral quietude, and nothing more dangerous than a man working in a rice field under a great straw hat came to disturb the hours of that long shining day. We drank afternoon tea from tin-cups as we waited for the wind to return and fill our sails, and we saw the red sun go down behind a purple hill. Then, while the cook berated his helpers on the after-deck, the odour of fried chicken mingled pleasantly with the cool breath of evening on the waters.

The cook, shifting smoothly from his after-deck to his fore-deck manner, appeared, and meekly and suavely announced dinner. So we entered the tiny cabin, to eat

by the light of a smoky lantern, and the swift darkness of the tropics fell like a curtain around us.

During dinner Mr. Brace amused me with gossip about a friend of his, the Chinese magistrate of these parts. Mr. Brace invited him to dinner every now and then. The magistrate was a benign person, who was not in the least appalled by knives and forks, and affably smiled at everything. A few weeks before there had been a revolution in the province, stirred up by some desperadoes who had taken refuge in a Buddhist monastery. The magistrate went forth clothed in his notion of his own authority and captured those desperadoes. Then, with his captives, he went on a parade through the province. Every now and then he would cut off a few heads and present them in passing to a village as a wholesome token of his regard. When his captives were thus disposed of, he came back to dine with the missionaries on beefsteak and become once more the perfect Chinese gentleman.

Just as Mr. Brace was promising to introduce me to this efficient person, one unanimous thrill of horror went down our backs, and our smiles froze into a stare. Our boat had stopped. Against the windows of our cabin a dozen grinning Chinese squatted like frogs, their heads pressed close to the glass. Beyond them the form of a sail-boat loomed darkly. At the same moment an official-looking person strode into our midst. "The Pirate!" I thought. He looked for all the world like a pirate. He had a clanking sword, high boots, a diabolical expression, and strangely enough in these days of the Chinese republic, a pigtail. He looked at me fiercely, just as if he were saying, "Ha! What have we here?" and struck an attitude, muttering strange oaths.

"This," I thought with a thrill half of terror and half

of curiosity, "this is the real thing. If he doesn't eat me or something, how much fun it will be to tell Dorothy about it."

Meanwhile, Mr. Brace and the cook rose to the occasion. The cook, bowing in all directions, interpreted the muttering of oaths to mean that this was a police-boat sent by the efficient magistrate to patrol the river. He wanted to know whether we had any bad characters on board. Mr. Brace promptly adduced a Chinese passport. I also indicated the Chinese inscription on the back of my passport. At these the pirate scowled darkly, and indicated that they would never do. Then he seized a piece of paper and began making signs upon it.

"A death-warrant," I thought. "Why be so formal about it here in the wilderness?"

Mr. Brace's face cleared. "Oh, I *see*," he said. "He wants a testimonial from me showing that he has done his duty, and, if I turn out to be a bad character, it won't be his fault. He wants to show it to the magistrate."

So he sat down and wrote cheerfully in English, beginning: "*Dear Old Head-hunter:*"

"Isn't it risky to be frivolous with a gentleman of his disposition?" I asked.

"Oh, that's all right," he said, scribbling as he talked. "There's a missionary who translates the English for the magistrate. He knows my style and translates tactfully. This is an honorific title, you know, and will sound beautiful in Chinese."

After a moment he passed the note over to me. "That will do, I guess," he said.

The note read as follows: "Dear Old Head-hunter: Your police-system is certainly a whiz. I'll recommend it

to Tammany when I get home. I don't know whether it gets hold of the bad characters, but I am sure it captures all the good ones. We three who are now in its hands are good ones—I being your knife-and-fork-eating friend, with my wife, who hasn't a grudge against anything at all in your province except bad characters, opium, and smallpox, and our companion being a young lady named Lovely Lotus Flower, whose only intention is to be eaten by a tiger as soon as possible. We promise not to rob, burn, kill, or otherwise interfere with your exclusive prerogatives."

This document he signed with a scrawl which, he averred, was the Chinese character for his own name. My private opinion is that it was intended as an alibi, in case this document should survive the normal fate of a foreign tongue, written in a vile handwriting, with a soft lead pencil on crumpled, dirty paper. Then he delivered it, bowing, to the pirate. Instantly the pirate's whole demeanour changed. He also bowed, deeply, blandly, benevolently, and marched happily away, while all the grinning spectators at our window vanished like a chorus in a musical comedy. So ended my only chance of being captured by a pirate.

"Since when has my name been Lovely Lotus Flower?" I demanded when it was all over.

"Oh," he replied, indifferently, "in China one must have a Chinese name. So I christened you."

CHAPTER II

I BECOME A WHITE WONDER

OUR encounter with the law left us a little nervous, vaguely afraid of we knew not what. Though travelling in strange wildernesses is not bad by day, it taxes one's courage by night. It was an eerie journey. The hills rose like gaunt and ghostly giants around us; and, as our boat tacked in the wind, the shadowy landscape shifted and changed as if by witchcraft. Even the sky was unstable. Sometimes a boat came alongside, troubling us vaguely with memories of pirates. In that shifting phantasmagoria of darkness all things seemed doubtful and sinister.

Meanwhile, our coolies kept up a harsh and unintelligible series of yells, interspersed with long whistles. Those we half playfully, half fearfully interpreted as signals to bandits on shore. They were probably whistling for the wind. It is supposed that the wayward demons who inhabit the elements may be coaxed by whistling to lend a little more assistance to weary sailors.

Toward midnight we entered a creek and began to row. Here the shores closed in darkly above our heads, and there were fearful shapes of rocks, and footsteps among the bushes. In this neighbourhood, said Mr. Brace, there was a village in which there were no girl-babies. In a land where girls are unwelcome, the waters of the creek were too fatally near the huddling houses in which there was not even enough food for the boy-

babies. As I heard this, the ghostly land became more ghostly. Were we even now moving over the bodies of those little girls? Would their tiny white ghosts come forth to sit on the waters and wail? The frogs mourned in a melancholy chorus, and there was a vague barking of dogs far away.

I awoke at dawn to find the boat stranded in mud which was gilded by the light of a solemn sunrise. Nearby was a collection of little mud houses that smelled like a barnyard. This was the village in which there were no girl-babies. Some citizens of this misogynistic metropolis were squatting at my cabin windows, taking a good look at the foreign lady while she slept. It is not easy for a proper lady to make her toilet in the presence of a Chinese village, but there was no help for it. Philosophically making believe that they were not there, I proceeded. Even when silent awe gave place to vociferous wonder as I unbraided my yellow locks and began to comb them out, I maintained an air of stoical indifference and a fine imitation of inward calm. A sharp voice outside suddenly called my audience away, and I was allowed to apply the last hairpin in peace.

The voice which had thus delivered me belonged to as strange a character as I had met in the Orient, one of those links between the East and the West which the wandering British have left here and there in their wake. She was a squat, brown little woman, in a Chinese jacket and foreign skirt, and she spoke English with a slight oddity of accent and idiom. Her father had been an English trader years ago, who used to hunt tigers on the hills. In the wilderness he had built himself a mansion to retire to, surrounded with trees and roses and English lawns. Here his motherless daughter, "Miss Lulu," had grown up under the care of an *amah*—

more a little Chinese than an English girl. She had never seen the land of her mother's and father's birth. She lived among the Chinese, keeping a half-matriarchal surveillance over remote mountain hamlets into which no white person except herself ever came.

Having stopped to greet our boat, she was quite as interested in my blonde locks as were the gaping Chinese. She offered to show me off in the mountain villages as a real specimen of the Occident, and, if she might become my manager for such a little tour, she said she would then despatch me to Hingwha—all this with the enthusiasm of a mother proposing the *début* of a daughter. Gladly I assented.

So we said *good-bye* to my missionary friends, and set forth in sedan-chairs. The sedan-chair is the characteristic mode of travel in China. Rickshaws are metropolitan luxuries imported from Japan, and other wheeled vehicles confined only to small areas in the north. Through the greater part of the land the beasts of burden are all human, and the roads are only single trails through the fields. It is marvellous that so vast an empire, so closely knit as it has been in the past under a central government operating over thousands of miles, should be a land without roads, and without means of movement swifter than the pace of a human foot. Only the rivers have served as highways, and upon them the winds sometimes lend wings to travel and commerce. In Fukien province the only wheeled vehicle that any one had ever heard of was a missionary's baby-carriage. Yet all the future of China turns upon the unlocking of its sealed and stagnant life with electricity and steam. The melancholy and sordid history of these latter years is written in cruelly obstructed or

basely founded attempts to furnish China with railroads. But this is a story for another to tell.

Swinging in a chair hung upon two long bamboo poles, I was lifted on the shoulders of two coolies. Had I been very stout or very important I should have been carried by four or six. The British governor of Hongkong journeys with half a dozen bearers, as in a coach and six, and they are clothed in the honourable colour of red, too. My coolies were clad in nothing in particular. I think they had one ragged suit between them. We started off on a fast walk, Miss Lulu in one chair and I in another. On level ground the bearers would break step, to keep our chairs from swinging too much. But, when they ascended a hill, they kept step, and the chair moved with a curious rhythm that almost suggested seasickness.

Moving thus, we left behind the manure, the fleas, and the curious inhabitants of the misogynistic village, and came out into lovely mountain country, quaintly terraced from valley to summit with little rice fields, and dotted with clustering villages. From a distance these villages had a pleasant pastoral prettiness. Their curly roofs nestled among twisted old trees and were beautifully reflected in pools of water. But near at hand they were vile beyond description, noxious masses of unclean animal life. For the fertility of those little fields, now so deeply, freshly green (each a little garden, as it were, cherished and caressed to the utmost yielding) depends upon a continual deluge of manure. No refuse or excrement whatsoever—of human or animal origin—is to be lost, and the villages are the storage places for it; and the life of the people is spent on a dung-hill. No sooner had the stench of one village yielded to the

scent of roses and the fresh mountain air than the presence of another was announced to our nostrils, often with a blast from a preliminary battalion of the insects that flourish in barn-yards.

Yet nothing could darken the romance of that fresh country-side, all glamorous and glowing as it was, that day, in the sunshine. It was the time of the transplanting of rice, and every man and every little boy who had outgrown his mother's apron strings was in the fields. So the villages were solely in the possession of the bound-foot women whose feet could not carry them along the perilous paths of the rice fields, the little children, the small-pox patients, and the men far gone in leprosy. A frowsy lot they were, except the women, who were amazingly neat in their blue trousers, red shoes, and smooth coiled coiffures. As we passed through village after village, the whole population would turn out to gaze upon us, but Miss Lulu led me swiftly on the way without social intercourse, for she was bound for a wilder country. Yet, for all our indifference, our fame went before us. And sometimes those who had heard of missionaries and their healing magic brought out the lame and the halt and the leprous and even the small-pox patients to be touched by me and made well. Once a demoniac ran and threw himself down before me, shrieking:

"The devil in that man is crying to you not to cast him out," said Miss Lulu, briefly.

"Do you think there is really a devil in him?" I asked rather breathlessly, when we had put a safe distance between him and us.

"Yes," she said. "There are devils in a great many Chinese. They sometimes come into a person through something he eats, but most often through a curse, or a



A frowsy lot they were—all except the women



"Must be a strange land," said a vivacious young thing, "where women wear skirts"



"Is she married?" I wondered, looking at a lovely,
satiny yellow face



These, it seemed, were evidences of her husband's love

terrible look. And they are very hard to send away, but sometimes the Christians do it through praying and spells."

"The Christian missionaries?"

"Any Christians, but most often white men who know how to pray. The devils are afraid of Christians, which is shown by the fact that there are no devils in Christian lands."

As she spoke, I thought of the stories of demoniac possession in the New Testament. Were they not like this?

By evening we were coming higher into the mountains, whose green slopes gave to the closing day an aspect of gloom and loneliness. We spent the night in a little Chinese inn—a kind of barn with a dirt floor, and terribly odiferous. But wrapped in our own blankets and covered with mosquito netting, beneath an opening in the roof which served as a peep-hole into a world of stars, I slept as one drunk with the mountain ozone which I had breathed all day.

By this time I felt that I was approaching starvation, my only diet for twenty-four hours having been unsalted rice and some funny little yellow fruit, like large rose-apples, which Miss Lulu called bee-baws. All along the way Miss Lulu had fared delicately on a variety of greasy sweetmeats and slimy stews. My squeamishness she regarded with some amazement. However, when the second morning dawned, she bestirred herself in my favour. Leaving the inn very early, without breakfast, while all the world was steaming in the dewy gloom before sunrise, we went from village to village, begging for a chicken for breakfast. At last it was forth-coming, a deliciously tender bird. It was promptly stewed for us in some kind of oil by a man who ran a little out-of-

door cook-shop, at which the farmers en route to the fields were snatching condiments for their rice. Safely outside of the perfume of the village, we spread it on a rock and ate it with delight, though without salt, before a large audience of Chinese.

Toward noon we came out in the unsophisticated villages where no white woman, not even a missionary, was known. The coolies set down our chairs before a cook-shop, where not unsavoury messes were steaming out-of-doors. A crowd of women emerged and cried in astonishment at the sight of us.

"See the men—the great, monstrous men that have come."

"We are not men," answered Miss Lulu. "We are women, and we belong to a strange country."

"Must be strange," said a vivacious young thing, "where women wear skirts."

"Frightfully immodest, I call it," remarked her mother-in-law, surveying with complacency her own neat trousers.

Then and there I discovered something which stood me in good stead in my wanderings among women in many lands—among the pygmies of the mountains and high-born ladies of the zenana, no less than in these mountain villages—: feminine social conversation is the same the world over, the shop-talk of a trade that is universal. In the jungle, the harem, or the empresses' courts, you talk about the same things that serve when you meet your husband's partner's wife at the country club. The formula is simple. Begin with clothes, and progress through housekeeping and husbands (prospective or actual) to babies. All women do it. Between these Chinese women and me it was instinctive.

"That is a coiffure," I thought, eyeing some massive

coils of shining black hair transfixed with something like two pounds of silver pins.

The owner of this hirsute masterpiece looked at me and began to laugh. Turning to the others, she said:

"What has she done to her hair?"

"It isn't hair at all," said another. "It's something else on her head."

"It's a pretty colour," remarked an old woman, "but it's odd to see it where hair ought to be."

When Miss Lulu interpreted these remarks to me, I told her to assure them that my hair was really hair and grew fast.

This statement amused them. It was plain to them that hair should be smooth and black. Mine was crinkly and yellow. Obviously then it was not hair. But one, less sceptical, produced a comb and a small piece of polished brass for a mirror.

"It's hair, all right," she said, "but it has never been combed. Perhaps if you will comb it and put some oil on it, it won't seem so odd."

The rest stood around me, as we might stand around a savage, all ready to instruct me in the customs of civilized life. I believe that they began to hope that I might adopt pantaloons and look like a real lady.

I dodged their missionary efforts as best I might, and from hair we proceeded to husbands.

"Is she married?" I wondered, looking at a lovely satiny yellow face.

"She is asking," said Miss Lulu, "whether you have a husband."

I replied that I had none.

No husband! They looked on me pityingly.

"Couldn't your parents get any one to marry you?"

asked an old mother, with a benevolent face and the tiniest red shoes in the world.

"In our country we choose our own husbands," I replied.

This statement was received with incredulity. I believe they thought it was just a clever trick on my part to make it seem as if my state was my own choosing.

In the next village we encountered more simple and admiring creatures. A little fellow with a frowsy pig-tail ran out to meet us, scampering along on the narrow, curving trail between the pools of the rice-fields, with the assurance of a tight-rope walker.

"This," said he to Miss Lulu, looking at me appraisingly, "is a White Wonder. Its skin is whiter than the bean cake. If I could take it and exhibit it in the village, I should be glad."

His proposal delighted me. It was my first chance to penetrate into the homes of these people. When we reached the village, his procedure showed something of that efficiency which the modern schools of salesmanship consider a unique discovery of their own. Calling two pock-mocked urchins as lieutenants, he despatched them ahead of us, from house to house, to announce our coming. The first house was like a little stable. The floor was of dirt, and on one side was a loft for dried grass. Under this stood a water-buffalo in a cloud of insects. Only a low partition fenced off the animal from the human tenants. In the centre of the roof was a large space intended as an entrance for light and air and an exit for smoke.

When I entered the house, a most mannerly old lady, with a kind, toothless smile, bustled out to receive me, and set a stool for me under this sky-light. Would I be so kind, she asked, as to take off my hat? I did so, and

as I revealed my coil of hair, there was a prolonged exclamation which brought several daughters-in-law on the scene.

"Look at this old woman," they cried.

"She is not an old woman," said the mother-in-law. "She is a very young child. Look at her skin. Is it not tender and white, like the skin of a young child that has never worked in the rice-fields? Look at her hands. Are they the hands of one who is old enough to do work?"

The hands attracted them at once, and they fluttered around me wistfully, putting their own horny brown paws next to mine, stroking the skin of my fingers, tenderly, fearfully, as if these delicate appendages of the white lady might break. "Ah," said they, "it is plain that your father is a man of many servants. You have not worked."

But the more they observed me, the more perplexing became the question of my age.

"Surely she is very old," said one young girl. "Her hair is perfectly white."

"Oh," replied another. "They are born with white hair in her country. When they are old, it is dark like hers," pointing to Miss Lulu.

At the moment I smiled at their provincial notions. But since I have travelled in so many lands, I often think what a marvellous "sport" the blonde Nordic type is among human faces. Everywhere else among men there is the same general colour scheme, with only a variation in shade from pale cream colour to black. The standard human countenance, I am convinced, is to be painted in shades of sepia, and all this gold and titian hair, these blue eyes and rose-tinted cheeks, represent Nature on a little spree, "off her trolley," as it were.

By the time I had reached the point where these dim gleams of philosophy began to penetrate my enjoyment of the good ladies' wonder, my small manager was making desperate signs to us to move on. He wished to exhibit his prize in a good many other places, and the schedule required speed.

The next house was a mansion. It was perhaps as large as the "two rooms and bath" in which fastidious New Yorkers now reside, neatly paved with brick and furnished with some black carved furniture. The ladies were well-dressed and well-cared for. Perhaps their higher social station had given them a greater appreciation of exotic types, or possibly it had taught them deceiving manners. For they were frankly admiring. With them I entered into a considerable discussion of the ways of women in our land. They listened with amused smiles, looking at each other now and then with little exclamations, but offering no crude criticisms after the manner of the vulgar. Complacency was writ large upon them. They were glad they were not poor like the rest of the village, and glad that they did not look like me; glad that their feet measured to the miniature standards of good form, and that their parents saved them the risk of picking husbands on their own; glad they lived in that village and nowhere else—and had they known the language of Gopher Prairie, they would no doubt have told me that theirs was the "best little old town going." The beginning and end of their opinion about the position and freedom of women in our country was that it was "very odd."

Leaving these elegant females, I was next precipitated into a nursery. At the door of one house, in front of which some convalescents from smallpox were sunning themselves, stood a meek, worn little body.

"Poor soul," thought I. "She does not look like the petted wife of an adoring husband. I wonder if he is good to her."

Just then she began to vociferate earnestly. "She is asking," said Miss Lulu, "whether your husband really loves you."

Apparently not understanding my answer, she toddled into the house and returned with six dirty, pock-marked, frowsy urchins. These, it seemed, were evidence of her husband's love. What had I to show for it? I said that I had no children. Instantly the news spread throughout the neighbourhood. As I went on, from house to house, the women gathered around me with little inarticulate murmurs of pity. No children! How very sad. Each would collect her own ragged, sickly brood, and look upon me with sorrowful pride, from the heights of triumphant motherhood. One woman who was a leper, held up her baby, half tauntingly, as I passed her abode.

"At least," said her rheumy eyes, "I have this."

So I passed from house to house, and from village to village, like a circus on parade. I was mistaken for everything from a baby to an ancestor. But as I went on, a certain wonder seized me that human nature should be everywhere so much alike, not only in its essential emotions, but in its mannerisms. After all, these villages might have been any small towns in America. And this was the more noticeable because economically they differed considerably from our small towns. Our small towns are trading centres for the farms. The life of the agricultural population is isolated on separate plots of land, each home standing alone. An Oriental village, on the other hand, in China or India or Japan, is something like a communal farm-home. The people, instead

of placing each his home on his own land, group their dwellings for protection and mutual service, with their lands in a circle around them. In the morning they go out to work in their fields, and in the evening they return to the village, bringing their animals with them, and locking them up in their own houses for protection against thieves. Some few, of course, may be specialized for shop-keeping or cooking, but often this work is left to the women or is done by men who are also farmers. The village is, therefore, the communal home of the agricultural population, and is largely self-sufficient.

But, though the author of *Main Street* ascribes the stagnant life of our small towns to their parasitic character, as middle-men, and often superfluous middle-men, in the midst of a productive agricultural life, I could not see that the greater economic productivity of these villagers added much to the spiritual content of their lives. Kindly, prudish, mid-Victorian in their moral ideals, inured to dirt, smallpox, bound feet, and fleas, they knew of nothing and cared for nothing outside of their own little group of hovels. Of the political experiments of China they were ignorant; to wars and revolutions, blandly indifferent. But they could wax rather excited about the bandits in the mountains who robbed the next village but one, or the oppressions of their own village head-man.

Yet sometimes as I journeyed among them, upon them would dawn the truth that all women are sisters under the skin, and that this enormous, mis-shapen, mis-coloured creature out of strange far-away lands was a creature like themselves. And between us sprang up companionship and understanding, founded in those great elemental cares and interests of womanhood, which no amount of special training, and no divergence

of colour in hair and skin and eyes can ever change or eradicate. But sometimes, too, the modern maid within me, the denizen of cities, and the wider paths of the world, would assert herself, and I would think in exasperation :

“If only something could give them a jolt!”

In this I spoke as a prophet though I knew it not, for the jolt was even then coming their way and making havoc among the ancestors. But this is a tale for another chapter.

CHAPTER III

HAVOC AMONG THE ANCESTORS

WE were now headed for Hingwha, Miss Lulu escorting me till she could deliver me into the charge of a missionary. Slipping rapidly through the villages, we now avoided their sociable inhabitants in an anxiety to get on. Instead of the manners of the living, I turned my attention to the tiny wayside shrines, full of tawdry, tarnished images of gods and goddesses and devils, and to the tombs of the ancestors, and the red arches to pious widows, which gave a romance, half human, half unearthly, to the narrow mountain trails. For the lives of these little grey villages were environed with a world of gods and demons, and the ghosts of the dead who had died through hundreds of years—gaudy gods, purple, and red, and gold, and green; and demons of wind and water; and ghosts of men whose social power is singularly enlarged by the grave. Coming out of the lively swarm and hum of the village, into the wide presence of the sky and the hills and the endless procession of shrines and tombs, I often felt as if I were emerging into a world of spirits, and the very sunshine seemed to have about it a kind of ghostliness.

But the ancestors were not having it all their way in those regions, nor the widows who were called pious because, being young and fair, they would not take a second husband, but remained true to the dead. So greatly does death and the entrance into the heritage of the ancestors exalt a man that he who in life was a

commonplace soul, with a bad temper or a set of dull wits, becomes a hero in his tomb, and faithfulness to him is like faithfulness to one's own king or country—a virtue to be rewarded with a memorial arch, and public respect forever. Yet another spirit, I found, was abroad in the mountains, and making inroads even into the psychology of widows.

As we went through the villages, I became conscious of a change of attitude. There was a much livelier curiosity, a certain tension and argument, and sometimes positive hostility.

"Again and again," said Miss Lulu, with a puzzled air, "they ask me: Are we come to insult the ancestors? And others say, are we those marvellous people who have knowledge of everything? And some say, too, are we come to make their girls wantons? I do not understand. It is a strange talk that they have."

Then suddenly as we journeyed across a field to a group of huts in the distance, a strange sweet sound floated on the morning air. "Onward, Christian soldiers," on my life! Neither in time nor tune, but quite unmistakable! As we drew near, we found the place in an uproar. All around the Confucian temple, the temple of the ancestors, was stretched canvas, as at an out-of-door camp-meeting or a Chautauqua, and from within issued the liveliest sounds that ever I heard in the courts of the gods. There was an uproar of voices in speech, the beating of a drum, and a struggle and wail of Christian hymns. And thither, by all the paths of the rice fields, the people were running, with wonder upon their faces.

Miss Lulu promptly invited the coolies to set down our chairs, and, going before me, elbowed her way in, with her usual air of authority and a lively sprinkling

of Chinese invectives. We entered one of the bare, red Confucian temple halls, now enlarged by ante-rooms of canvas, and adorned with paraphernalia quite unmistakable. It was crowded with people, especially with women, and their eyes were turned in wondering attention to a young man on an improvised platform who was haranguing them passionately. Behind him sat a choir of Chinese school-girls, lovely little creatures, fresh and clean as flowers, in pink and blue trouser suits. They wore hair-ribbons that never grew in the Celestial empire, and, beneath their left arms, large masculine handkerchiefs, which were also not indigenous, were pinned with safety pins, for ready reference. After every few sentences of speech, the young man would pause, with a resounding thump upon an open Bible, and a little girl would come forth, shyly bow, speak a few words by rote, and return to her place. At other times the whole group would sing, to the accompaniment of a drum and a fiddle. Behind them the walls were covered with Bible pictures, and from the rafters dangled long strips of red tissue paper covered with black characters, which I later learned were Bible texts.

It was the gayest Christian meeting I had ever seen, and, to the congregation, much like a circus, I fancy. After the pretty maidens had performed a while, each displaying her unbound foot, encased in a bewitching boudoir slipper of pink or blue, with rosettes, the earnest young man took the stage all to himself. His speech was fiery and radical. Did they see these girls, he asked? Did they observe how clever they were, clever as Confucian scholars, how well and rosy, how nice their feet looked? Well, that was because they were Christian girls, and were properly educated. Here followed all the arguments on the education of women which were



The ancestors were not having it all their own way



Thither, by all the paths of the rice fields, the people
were running



The tiny tots basked, like kittens, in the sunshine
of the mission



So the Bishop went his way, distributing his simple gift of
peace even in the red courts of Confucian temples

used on our own great-grandfathers, with scathing references to current methods of railroading girls into matrimony, quite unprepared and without choice on their part, followed by a speech on real versus false modesty, and a complete physiological analysis of bound feet. The congregation listened with amazement and horror, riveted to the spot. It was like telling villagers in some parts of our country that bobbed hair and cigarettes do not make an immoral woman, and that a wife's economic independence does not wreck the home—only much worse. From this he passed to a spicy description of their own village life—their ignorance, their conceit, their scandals and back-biting and cruelty in applying their own *mores*—as, for instance, when they permit a childless wife to be divorced without any means of subsistence. He told them of the dirt and disease in which they lived, and declared that fleas, smallpox, and a dung-hill life were not necessary, and there was a great country named America where they did not exist—at least in such profusion. The people listened incredulously. As well tell an old-fashioned house-wife that babies need not have colic, or a business man that slums need not exist and private fortunes are immoral. He concluded with a tender account of Christ as the Master of Utopias, and a picture of a Christian society such as exists nowhere on earth, though he was, no doubt, right in this: that some places are nearer to it than a Chinese village.

When he ended there was a hub-bub. The flood of radical opinion had overwhelmed the intelligence of some and left them stupefied. Some left in displeasure. But the children and frivolous young women stayed to hear more of the strange music, and there was a little knot of people genuinely interested, though puzzled.

Miss Lulu was ready to go. She was a Christian of sorts, enough at least to look down upon the Chinese as heathen, but she had a superstitious dislike of missionaries.

"That young man thinks he knows more than Confucius," she remarked. "When he is older, he will be wiser."

But I was thoughtful. The speech gave me a new light on Christian propaganda in the Orient. What red-hot stuff this gospel was, at least in the hands of these fiery youths, fresh from Christian colleges, no doubt, and unchecked by missionaries. Careering thus through the villages, throwing a challenge to ancestors and gods, and the ancient codes of the land, what seeds of social revolution they were scattering! Toward evening, in a grey twilight shot with soft rain, we heard another strain of music. It was a second division of this army of evangelists, marching around a village with drum and horns, announcing a meeting for the next day. Boldly they marched, young men, and young women who paddled shamelessly along on unbound feet, with the dreams of their school-days yet about them, and youth's unvanquished courage in their eyes. The veriest aristocrats among the poor villagers, by reason of their finer features, their cleanliness, and fresh clothes, marching and singing, they seemed an apparition in that humble place. As we passed on toward another little village whose red fires gleamed through the deepening grey of night, their voices singing out of the mists behind me seemed spiritual and strange.

That night I lodged with a missionary, and some of this new-found romance in Christianity vanished in the shop-talk of his calling with which he entertained me. One more day's travelling with the missionary brought

us within sight of Hingwha, the city where I was to meet the Bishop again. All afternoon our course lay by winding creeks and inlets, and the keen breath of the sea mingled pleasantly with the fragrance of wayside roses. At sunset we reached the city wall.

The city looked beautiful in the sunset, the curled roofs of the houses almost hidden in the luxuriant foliage of orchards. Only the odours and the evil twinkle of millions of insects dancing in every bar of evening light marred the impression of happiness. In the distance I saw the large, angular buildings of the mission towering above the trees, and in a few minutes we were within the walls of the compound.

Then I knew why, to the early Christians and the men of the Orient, Paradise was a walled garden. Within that blessed circle of brick and mortar, there was another world, a world of lawns and clean, verandaed houses, a bit of America transplanted. A blue-eyed boy in white linen was standing at the gate to welcome us. Shouting "Mamma, Mamma, they've come," he went skipping up the walk between green lawns and rows of flaming nasturtiums. There was a vision of wide, cool rooms, with Chinese rugs on the floor and roses in great Chinese vases—roses fresh and dewy everywhere—while the gentle servants came pattering around with cold water and white towels, and the cares and the dust of the day vanished in one heavenly sensation of cleanliness, kindness, and peace.

"Verily," I thought, "the young man was right. And there are some who, just by reason of not living in a Chinese village, know Paradise."

CHAPTER IV

A PIOUS INTERLUDE

"MY dear, more fun! We're going itinerating to scandalize the heathen. And you're going, too, because Dad says you will be a moral influence on me."

It was the fresh voice of the Incurable Daughter, two hours later on the Saturday evening of my arrival at Hingwha, scattering the echoes of psalm-singing in the mission compound with privileged impudence. I looked at her like one famished for the sight of a fair white face. All the evening our tongues raced each other. We made scandalous signs to each other during evening prayers, and passed notes in the hymn book. They had come to Hingwha more directly, after a day or two in Foochow, and, well—there was a youth at the Y. M. C. A. just out from home, and not so pious as some—and—that was about all there was to it, except that her observations of villages were naturally quite secondary. On Monday we were to start back by a different route from that by which they had come, and I was to come with them. But meanwhile there was Sunday to worry through, and, "my dear," said Dorothy, "there will be some praying in this place!"

On the whole I found Sunday not half so bad as Dorothy prophesied. Almost at dawn the Chinese began pouring into the compound for services. As I watched them come, beaming, eager, washed, adorned, I suddenly realized what the foreign religion meant to these simple villagers, so far removed from the currents

of the world's life. Something to do, something to strive for, something to hope for, something to make to-morrow different from to-day, and one day in the toiling seven not as other days—this was what the mission had brought to them. They had gone round and round like water-buffaloes treading the water wheels, round and round, blind-folded, in one changeless circle, knowing nothing, hearing nothing outside the rice-fields and the ill-smelling walls of their own houses. Learning to read the simple Romanized, and memorizing the hymns alone, opened to them vast new worlds of thought and fancy. Most, of course, had refused the new draught of learning, turning back with complacency or indifference to their own customs and their own gods. But those who took it thus, who rejoiced to stop work of a Sunday, surely, in them, there had been need of a little more life.

To the women, especially, it was all a glorious adventure. The walk to the mission was, for many of them, the longest walk they had ever taken in their lives, their first excursion into the great world, their first attempt really to rise and do something besides the monotonous traditional tasks of the household. And as they came toddling in on their bound feet the wonder, the daring, the surprised sense of power which shone in their faces was pathetic to see. Whatever the new gospel meant to them, I think this opening of the doors of their lives to the breath of a larger world must surely have been wholesome.

So all day long there were singing and Bible classes and services for everybody, from the tiny tots who basked in the general kindliness of the mission like kittens in the sun and went away clutching picture cards, to worn men and women in whose eyes a new curiosity about life gleamed dully. Next day, before we

started, there was an even greater buzz, for many had come back to school. There were kindergartens and schools for children of all ages, and grave boys in gowns and winsome lassies in trousers were conning their lessons. But most touching of all was a class where mothers might learn to read the Bible. A woman with her baby at her breast was teaching the class; and other women with children on their knees were trying to make out the meaning of great characters on large pages, while other infants were creeping on the floor, cooing and rolling over each other like puppies.

Nor were the wonders of the mission confined to Sunday services. During tiffin, we suddenly heard a delighted cackle in the adjoining room. Running out, we found an old, old Chinese woman who had strayed in from somewhere, and was enjoying herself hugely—staring, giggling, chattering with amazement. I never saw a woman so old. She had one long black tooth, and her eyes were bleared and almost closed with age. Yet she had some of the charm so frequent among old people in China. The freedom and consequence they enjoy, as respected heads of a whole army of children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren and the release from economic pressure, gives to the old men, and especially to the old women, a certain liveliness and spirit, often in notable contrast to the sullen mien of the young. So this old woman came tottering in on her tiny red shoes, taking possession of the house with the self-assurance of a privileged character, marvelling at the great house, each room larger than any hut in a village—at the rugs, at the furniture, and at us.

Suddenly her eye fell upon a long mirror at the end of the room, and in it the toddling, trousered figure of an old woman. She screamed in delight. Here was

another old woman, just as astonished as she was. She advanced to the other old woman, asking her what she thought of this place. The other old woman did not answer. Our guest was puzzled by the silence. But she smiled pleasantly at the other old woman, and was evidently reassured to receive a smile in return. Soon she began to notice something queer about the other old woman. The creature was imitating everything she did! Advancing to the mirror in another attempt to establish social relations, she was delighted to see her elusive country woman advancing on her part. Finally she put out her hand tentatively, by way of greeting, and encountered the hard cold surface of the mirror. She jumped with astonishment and tried again—with the same results.

What she thought I don't know, but suddenly she threw back her head and cackled—cackled and cackled with glee till her staff vibrated on the floor with her mirth. When she saw the other old woman laughing, too, the peals were redoubled. I thought she would laugh herself into apoplexy. But a servant, entering just then, took her in charge, and she and the other old woman were led simultaneously away.

Yet not all the pathos of that Sunday at the mission was in the lives of the Chinese guests and communicants. That afternoon a missionary came into the compound with his wife from a distance, bearing in his arms his wee golden-haired baby for whom he wished baptism at the hands of the Bishop. It was a sunny, tropical afternoon and the Anglican missionaries—the only other white people in the compound—had gathered on one of the vine-covered, flowery verandas to pay their respects to our Bishop. So they held the simple service there, out of doors, and all the pomp and ceremony of a

great cathedral were never more touchingly solemn. After our prolonged contemplation of darker children, the little blonde head ruffled by the summer breeze seemed fair and angelic. The noble words of the service acquired a peculiar meaning and tenderness, as the young parents, so far away from home and the sustaining props of their own civilization, promised to bring up their little one in the faith of their fathers.

After he had finished the formal prayer of the service, the Bishop, holding the child close in his arms, added a few words of his own for the future of the little one for whom the rite of baptism and the vow of the parents were his only pledge that he would receive his normal inheritance; and for whom the customs of his own home must be the sole representative of all that his forefathers across the sea had shaped for their children through the long and struggling centuries.

And seeing all this, though the day passed cheerfully enough, I went to bed that night feeling a little strained and overwrought, as one who has passed through an emotional crisis, and lay awake for a long time looking at the great southern stars in that alien, mysterious sky.

CHAPTER V

THE HERITAGE OF NOAH

By evening of the next day I felt like one of those wicked ones whom Noah did not take into the ark. Yet there was no promise of the deluge in the wild rose sky that bloomed over the misty green of the rice-fields, at dawn, on Monday morning. And, when after averting a few tragedies among the coolies and distributing some last minute episcopal blessings, we at last set out, the whole world was sunny and shining.

The method of our migration was very different from the hand-to-mouth way in which I had been progressing. I was now part of a dignified parade. Our stoppings and startings were now ceremonies of note, and we proceeded among the population with all the stateliness of an army on the march. Our party consisted of the Bishop, Lady, Dorothy, and a missionary, who served as guide, herald, and secretary, with the addition of sixteen coolies to carry our five sedan-chairs, twenty coolies to convey our baggage, bedding, and other supplies—and a cook. Of these the cook was naturally the most important. In comparison with him the Bishop was quite secondary. On him depended our peace, our health, and indeed our very lives, and our itinerary was partly determined by the necessity of levying a tax of chickens, eggs, and rice on the population, to further his indispensable ministrations. He was a sort of magician, however, and could extract a dinner of many courses

from a small bowl of charcoal as easily as Aladdin acquired jewels by rubbing the lamp.

So we set out on a sunny day in the midst of the season of rains. The whole world shone with a dewy freshness and luxuriance, and the glitter of water was diffused like sunshine through the land. Through the young rice blades the breeze rippled with a soft sound, as of the faint rustling of silk, and ruffled the water around their roots into twinkles and sparks of light. Here and there, where not even a Chinese farmer could find room for a seed, the small white roses took courage and bloomed, hanging their trailing, prickly masses of fragrance on every dead stump and jutting rock, and sweetening the sunshine.

So we progressed from village to village along a highway which was, perhaps, as old as Christianity, but which consisted only of a narrow footpath roughly paved with stones, and worn smooth by the passing of many bare feet. In nearly every village we stopped for social conversation for ourselves and rice for our coolies. Usually we were set down in what might be called the Main Street—a crooked little alley lined with counters and tiny open shops, like a primitive edition of an aisle in Woolworth's. There the press of human life was thickest and the vermin most active. There the fragrance of the mountain sunshine was stifled in the odours of out-of-door cook-shops, and of *débris* less savoury, and the light entered among the low roofs only in stray sunbeams which seemed all alive with insects and dust that danced within them. But sometimes a whole counter of newly caught fish diffused a damp coolness, and an odour that was pleasant because it was clean. Sometimes a whiff of temple incense blew through the filthy shadows. Or, amidst the press and stench of life, a

stone image of Buddha or some elder god, rough hewn out of stone centuries and centuries ago, stood immutable and serene, like a fossil of a grander day.

Suddenly, as we stopped in one village, the sunshine went out like an electric light switched off, and the heavens opened. I saw no more sunshine in South China.

At first it was rather interesting. We pushed through blinding streaks, the coolies dripping and steaming like rain-demons. As the water increased, roads became streams and mountain brooks widened into roaring rivers. Into these the coolies plunged, waist-high, with us in chairs on their backs, while the floods rippled and splashed around us. Even Dorothy's spirits began to wilt.

"Marjorie," she called, "I'm falling into this river. I'm drowning."

"You might reflect for your comfort," said the Bishop, "that this river is the only clean thing you'll find in China to fall into."

As we went on, the water accumulated in our chairs. We sat in puddles with our feet in pools, while the chairs spouted water like shower-baths. At last we came to a village where two missionaries had taken refuge. Of course they had picked out the cleanest spot and had been indulging in sanitary activities, but their shelter remained a vile little barn with a dirt floor. Stepping over a sow that burrowed in the mud, we were made hilariously welcome by the refugees and invited to afternoon tea. It was delicate jasmine-flower tea, served with rich raisin-cakes which would have graced an emperor's tea-house. We perched on odds and ends of Chinese furniture, and drank it gleefully.

When our hosts tried to press us to stay and spend

the night there, wrapped in our rubber blankets, we decided to push on into the rainy dusk. About midnight we hoped to come to the house of a Chinese pastor who could offer us a few of the comforts of home. So we braved the terrors of the night, making our way on foot through the village by the light of a dim, smoky lantern. All around us the liquefied filth was plunging and roaring, and our lives seemed to depend on a safe passage from one slippery stone to another. Meanwhile the fleas and mosquitoes, with dampened wings, settled on us and clung, stickily stinging.

At last we decided to make some use of the watery element. Coming to a canal, we put our chairs and coolies on one canal-boat and ourselves on another. Ours had a low arched roof under which one could not stand or sit, but could lie down. There was space about eight feet square in which to dispose of ourselves in horizontal positions. It took some judicious packing to stow away five people in this area, but we did it at last, half-sitting, half-reclining, with bent heads, close as dates in a box, and dripping all over each other.

"This," said the Bishop, "is travelling *de luxe*."

Toward midnight we found shelter under the roof of a Chinese pastor. Next morning, at five o'clock, we started off again in the deluge. We ate tiffin in a Chinese house with an audience of pigs, chickens, and steaming Orientals. In the afternoon we came to a Methodist chapel built in good honest western style, more sanitary than picturesque, more dry than beautiful. Never did anything look so much like home. With one accord we sat down and refused to go farther. When we found that the cook had preceded us and had set out tea for us in tin cups, our joy knew no bounds.

Then there arose a serious question: how could we

change into dry clothes, for all our baggage was full of water? One and all we were dripping and steaming and fast turning the dry little church into an imitation of a bath-house. Then, with a blush, Dorothy produced a sartorial error. We had given her our dress clothes to be preserved for us in Foochow, all wrapped in oiled paper. By mistake they had been packed with the stuff for inland travelling. She had been carrying them around all this time, and exerting all the ingenuity of the cook to keep them dry. They were the only things that were not as wet as the world outside.

With delight we fell upon them and arrayed ourselves in attire which would have done justice to a society editor's report of a wedding. The Bishop was quite distinguished in a tropical afternoon costume of pongee; Dorothy looked prettier than ever in blue taffeta; and I billowed forth in georgette crêpe. In honour of our costumes we waxed witty and elegant and conversed in studied small-talk, though the Bishop did find it necessary to announce in tones of episcopal authority that one must ignore fleas during tea.

As the rainy afternoon closed upon us, our hilarity grew apace. Even the cook succumbed and produced, from heaven knows where, the crowning masterpiece of his sleight-of-hand tricks—a white tablecloth. We had a dinner of three courses, served with elegance on a wooden box. When the bowls of tomato soup appeared just as the Bishop bowed his head to say grace, Dorothy sang out, "Praise Heinz from whom all blessings flow," and was for two seconds under the displeasure of the church. The rapturous consumption of soup was followed by baked beans, our only bread being rice. We ended with tinned cherries. These were mathematically divided between us, not without mutual recriminations

and heart-burnings. The missionary sadly remembers that he had only nineteen cherries, whereas I had twenty, and Dorothy's shameless appropriation of twenty-one, in the face of episcopal protests, remains a crime to be avenged the next time we open a can in the wilderness.

At sunset the whole sky temporarily cleared in a magnificent flame of colour, followed almost at once by clear and ringing night, which after a few hours once more dissolved in water. But for a little while the world was beautiful with the light of the stars.

The population took advantage of the temporary clearing, to come in a body to look at us. Smoking, gesticulating, infecting the sacred atmosphere, they gathered into the little church. Still luxuriously conscious of our own washed, perfumed, and silk-attired state, we felt this intrusion to be peculiarly obnoxious.

"Get out, you little devils," said Dorothy. "Don't you know you have germs? What do you mean by bringing germs into the house of the Lord?"

This protest being ineffectual, she suddenly had an inspiration. Slowly, stealthily, she reached for her camera, fixing her eye on them sternly the while. Slowly, stealthily, she turned it on them, shooting out the lens. There is a superstition among these village Chinese that foreigners steal their spirits with the camera, and whoever is photographed will shortly fade away and die. Scurrying, screaming, falling over each other, our callers departed. So she escorted them out, with the triumphant air of the Pied Piper of Hamelin, and they were seen no more.

After dinner the Bishop held a meeting of native preachers in the chapel. For, though to us the only

drama of those days was the drama of the elements, the Bishop's most temporary abiding place was the focus of human struggle and aspiration. Through this wilderness were men to whom he stood as the symbol of the most vital moment of their lives—men whom he had ordained, men whom he had married, men whose little ones he had baptized, men with whom he had stood in the presence of death. And sometimes they came a long way through mud and rain to see and speak with him again. There was, too, a good deal of practical business, and a kind of pastoral research; for bishops, as executives of the church, do not always know a great deal about the lives of simple missionaries and Christians of an alien race, and the Bishop had dedicated this itinerary to his own enlightenment. But most of all there were the problems of conscience, for never was the conscience of the Church so uneasy as in those closing days of the war. Into even the most remote missionary compounds the questions that neither war nor peace have settled had come to trouble men whose lives had been rooted in conceptions which did not easily withstand the devastation of logic, but were not, for that reason, insufficient to a useful life. In particular the young Chinese Christians were insistent. There was so much that they wanted to understand. And all the while, as the rain poured, and the fleas performed, and village after village washed past us in the deluge, the Bishop went his way distributing his simple gift of peace and kindly common sense, in brief conferences in hovels and Chinese inns, and even in the red courts of the Confucian temples—going through the ceremonies of the church, if not with fervour, yet always with dignity and tenderness; inspiring men to no heights of martyr-

dom, perhaps, but unsnarling their immediate troubles, and leaving them with cheer and courage for the routine of daily service.

So now he was to end this exhausting day with a conference in the Methodist chapel, and Dorothy and I were banished into outer darkness. We walked up and down the narrow paved path in the churchyard. It was strange and still and lonely. All around us were the solemn outlines of the hills; above us the eager, burning stars of the southern sky, lighting the darkness like passionate living things; and far and near, in every pool and rice-field, rose the vibrant, melancholy chorus of the frogs. I thought of the man behind the blurred glow of the chapel window, who seemed so near to the pulse of a new life in this ancient land, and of the young Chinese preachers who must seem to themselves exponents of a great new cause, professors of radical doctrines, heralds of the future of their people. In such effort, I reflected, with its eyes always on the future, with something to be done to-morrow which seems other and greater than the accomplishment of to-day, lies the secret of life, and no one who is borne through the days on such a current of energy can be wholly wretched. Then I thought of Lady, to whose fastidious, unventuresome spirit this messy way-faring of ours was misery. She longed only to vegetate in some quiet garden of society, with her few beloved ones planted securely, like trees, around her. Yet she had found a motive to drag her through a life that was often a torture to soul and sense in the happiness of being beside her husband. And now, though we were banished, she sat on the outer rim of his little conference, quietly, taking no part, with her eyes upon his face. Thinking of these things, I felt the intolerable loneliness of youth on the threshold



Inn-yard, Peking



Avenue leading to Ming Tombs

of life, a sharer neither in the labor nor the love with which I journeyed. At that minute there swelled upon the darkness the sound of singing—tenor voices, strangely keyed, singing “Abide with me,” in an alien tongue.

Dorothy flung her arms around me. “Marjorie,” she whispered, “I could just weep floods.”

Why, I did not ask. Seventeen needs as little outward cause for its floods as for its sunshine. We were tired, nervous, undeniably home-sick. Suddenly Dorothy, catching at some means of self-control, said, “Let’s *dance*.” As the hymn died away in a low hum that must have been the benediction, she whistled a one-step to which we had danced at home, and we began circling around in the darkness, on the narrow path of that little Methodist churchyard in China, beneath the burning alien stars.

“Girls! Girls!” said a scandalized voice from the door of the chapel. “Dorothy! And while your father is holding a service, too.”

Submissively we yielded and went to tuck our two lonesome selves away beneath the mosquito netting in the little upper room of the chapel, which had been dedicated to our use. But Dorothy, sitting upright on her canvas cot, her head in the darkness making a kind of white dome in the roof of her netting, looked out upon the stars in an unwonted mood of sentiment and young poetry.

“Might be the eyes of angels,” she said, “or God Himself, for that matter, with a thousand eyes like a peacock’s tail. Marjorie, do you suppose *they* disapproved?”

CHAPTER VI

THE GHOST OF THE TEMPLE

At least we were not narrow-minded in our acceptance of religious hospitality. Having slept in a Methodist chapel, we lunched next day in a Buddhist temple. Some time during the night the stars had vanished. Sullen and persistent the rain poured again and all the morning we had set our faces against the floods. At noon we came to a kind of scarlet structure that glowed like a red coal in the gloom, guarded by two green porcelain dragons with pink eyes, two soldiers in yellow uniforms, and an owl. Priests in robes of dull bronze silk came out, and, bowing suavely, invited us to enter. Chinese have a great respect for rank and title. The Bishop, it was understood, was an important magistrate of the Christians. The exponents of a rival religion asked no more. Their temple was at our service.

But they risked no personal contamination. As soon as we were comfortably established, those mute, courteous priests vanished, nor did we see the face of one of them again. But the temple itself seemed hospitable enough. Joyously we passed through a cheerful red pavilion, well paved and swept, and smelling pleasantly of incense, into an inner courtyard. It was still and deserted. Only an owl, in a low twisted tree of enormous girth, ruffled its wet feathers and looked at us, winking; and a small boy, sitting on his feet, beneath the roofed, open corridor that surrounded this inner garden, contemplated us silently, with bland, unblinking eyes,

like a small Buddha. Taking possession of a portion of the outer pavilion, the cook spread our table deliciously with hot soup, rice, and tinned meats. Thus refreshed with what in that place was most sacrilegious nourishment, we wandered for a while in the dust of the inner temple, learning the immortal future of sinners and carnivori like ourselves. For the orthodox Buddhist is a vegetarian, believing all sentient creatures to be brothers, and the taking of even the humblest life to be murder in some degree.

As in most Buddhist temples in China, there was a good deal amidst the dust and old incense of the place which did not owe its origin to the gentle saint of India. In the centre of the temple was a great golden deity, massive, paternal. He represented the fatherly spirit of Heaven, greater and older than Gautama, and yielding nothing to him in worship. He was guarded by ghastly blue demons with six arms, not properly gods of Buddhism, which, in the strictest sense, knows no God, but regarded as such, with propitiatory awe, by the common folk. Here and there in the corners of the temple sat Buddha himself, on his lotus flower, a calm golden image, smooth of brow and heavy lidded, with folded feet and slender benedictory hands, remote alike, it seemed, from the struggle of men and the vengeance and jealousy of the gods. All around these great idols, whose golden faces glowed in the dusk with a kind of ghostly vitality, stretched the landscape of Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise, graphically painted upon the walls.

Of the three departments of our immortal destiny, Hell had apparently been the most interesting to the artist. With the satisfaction of one who knows his own future secure, he depicted the throngs of men who stand

feeble and trembling before the open gates of death. Within those gates the magistrate of the underworld sat enthroned, and, in front of him, at a little desk, sat his secretary, a sour-looking recording angel, who stopped every candidate for the after-life upon the threshold, and looked up his biography in the files. Those who had been good to men, and better to animals, passed immediately over an arched bridge to Paradise, turning to look with self-complacent smirks upon those who were not so lucky. Beneath this bridge flowed a river of torture in which the demons were already dipping the guilty—a sight which seemed greatly to intensify the pure joys of those who had not known sin.

Since Purgatory was merely a mild and temporary version of the place of everlasting pain, the artist had naturally devoted his best strokes to Hell. Thither the guilty were borne by devils with pitch-forks, who looked like own brothers to some of the same race who cover with their infernal pageantry the manuscripts of old illuminated monkish volumes of the Middle Ages in Europe. Those who had cheated as shop-keepers in the bazaar were crushed under the heavy balances with whose weight they had tampered. Those who had lied, slandered, borne false witness, indulged in blasphemous or licentious speech, or had otherwise misused their tongues were deprived of the unruly member by a surgical operation designed, like the punishment of Prometheus, to last through all eternity—or at least until Hell itself shall work out its destiny and come into the ultimate peace. Thievery, however, did not fare so badly. At the last minute a bald-pated monk with a rosary descended from Heaven and carried the sinner off to the courts of peace—a socialistic monk, appar-

ently, who had theories about the rights of private property.

But the most detailed punishments were reserved for those who, like ourselves, at our late repast, had made unlawful use of animal flesh. Here the souls were turned over to the spirits of the beasts whom they had wronged. A man who used to like a juicy beef-steak now and then was being decapitated by a cow, while another cow, standing gracefully on her hind legs, held before him a mirror which showed himself, in life, in the act of removing a bovine head. Apparently a photograph of the crime had been kept for his confusion. Some who used to dine on frogs' legs, like the plutocrats in New York hotels, were broiled by frogs over a fire, and were beginning to curl up around the edges and become quite tender, to the delight of certain frog-chefs, who were superintending the cookery with grins of anticipation and pleasure. Meanwhile, to enforce the moral, an incidental sketch showed other souls blissfully proceeding up the heavenly way to Paradise on the backs of the grateful birds and beasts whom they never ate.

Purgatory, being not quite so lively a place as Hell, was treated rather more sketchily, and Paradise was dismissed in one long synthetic panel of bliss, which showed a great company of the blest dining with whiskered archangels in Heaven. Heaven was a glorified Chinese house, with a bit of landscape showing through the transparent walls.

As we were about to go, our eye was caught by an image of a woman in a little shrine behind a big Buddha, apparently neglected, and startlingly un-Chinese in conception and treatment. The cook, who knew everything, and was, besides, a Catholic, crossed himself when

he saw it, and murmured "Mother of God." The Bishop examined it closely.

"The robe," he said, "is the robe of a Syrian woman, and the feet are bare, while all the saints and gods in the temple wear shoes. And see," he added thoughtfully, "where the arms are broken off here, it is almost as if she had held a child. It is like an old, old image of the Madonna."

The cook, closely questioned by the missionary, was insistent. The Bishop recalled the old story of the Nestorian missionaries who, in the seventh century after Christ, came overland across the whole expanse of Asia, and converted even the emperor to their faith.

"But I believe their ministrations were mostly confined to the North," he added, "though there is a good deal of Catholicism in China, some of it very ancient and superstitious. Many of the river folk are Catholics and carry an image of the Virgin Mary, along with the eyes painted on the outside of their boats, to scare off the demons."

Afterwards this mysterious image troubled and haunted me, as did so much in these musty old temples. They were like torn pages of books which one could read only in snatches. Their immeasurable age seemed to carry the imagination back through spaces of ghostly time which the Occidental traverses with a kind of terror, like a child walking among grave-stones at night. And, in the Buddhist temples in particular, there seemed often a kind of parody of things long dear to western Christianity. This strange resemblance was felt even by the friars and Jesuit priests who first brought the faith of Jesus to China, and they were troubled by it. But they laid it to the devil's talent for caricature.

That night, while the wind-swept rain howled round

the shack where we snatched a few minutes of dry sleep, I thought of the temple, and its resemblance to things of Christian antiquity. Is it, I thought, that the trail of those Christian missionaries fourteen centuries ago, before our own forefathers had wholly forgotten Thor and Woden, does veritably lead through the Buddhist hell to the bare feet of the Syrian Mary? Is it that both religions, the faith of the East and the faith of the West, inherit at least their manners and their pageantry from the same ancestor, and have more in common than men have dreamed? Buddhism seems always an alien thing in China, suggestive of another home and other usages. Often the placid face of Gautama himself seems lost behind the native gods and demons which the imagination of the people has brought in to fill the ghostly vacuums of the religion which knows no God but only the crescent purity of the aspiring soul. But the faith, all corrupted as it is, carries with it reminiscences of its home in India, and intimations of inexplicable contacts. And through its temples and shrines there seems often to flutter a stranger ghost—the ghost of an old Catholicism.

CHAPTER VII

INFANT CASUALTIES

THE latter part of our journey lay through a wild country of sand and rocks and sea, girdled with towering, tiger-haunted hills. Beyond these we came to the brimming topaz floods of the Ming River just in time to attach our house-boats to a passing launch and speed home on borrowed steam to the dripping docks of Foochow. There among the wet palms and white lilies of the compound, the electric lights were shining, and little white children, as fair to our eyes as nursery pets of Paradise, ran out to greet us, and held up their fresh little faces to be kissed. And there we luxuriated for a week in the miracle of civilized life and the peace of its humdrum ways.

Swinging up and down the terraces of Foochow, with rain curtains drawn close, Dorothy and I learned little of that mossy old city except its smells, though Dorothy did announce that streets were "all dirt and yard wide." But we found a feudal charm and dignity in the life of the foreign community into the midst of which we had been received. Like the predatory lords who imposed themselves on the alien populations of France, England, and Northern Italy in the Middle Ages, the white men in China live a stately life, lords of many servants, self-conscious and self-inclosed within the narrow bounds of their own society and culture. Beneath the tall many-verandaed homes of the Y. M. C. A. and Christian colleges, so graciously set amidst lawns and fenced off by

walls, the small native houses seem to cling to the hill-like tenantry beneath a twelfth-century castle. If it be the property of poetry, as Shelley says, to make the familiar be as if it were not familiar, the humblest exile from Hoboken or Kalamazoo who comes out to China to sell phonographs or give away the gospel may take to himself a little of that grace.

Amidst the foreigners—who, stripped of their Oriental halos, are merely an international collection of traders, consuls, and missionaries, all united in the bonds of brotherhood by common and passionate hatred of the Japanese—Dorothy and I made our own appropriate discoveries. Dorothy discovered Harold, and I discovered the Infant Casualty. Two Infant Casualties they were, in fact, for the wreckage Dorothy was making about her had little in it of maturity.

As soon as we arrived, the Y. M. C. A. had reopened negotiations in the person of Harold.

Harold had been a good boy in a small American town, and he had transferred to China all the ideas and mannerisms that belonged to him as such, without visible alteration in transit. He had an innate but not offensive consciousness of superiority, inasmuch as in his own group he had always been a leader and he knew, in consequence, that it is "personality" that counts in life. He had been the editor of his school paper, vice-president of his class in a small denominational college, and president of the Christian Endeavour Society as often as he would let himself be elected. He thought the attitude of the Y. M. C. A. rather too strict on the subject of amusements; was sure that a man could be a Christian without being a prig; expressed his aspirations in terms of the word *service*, rather than *salvation*; and made a virtue of certain promises to his mother, to whom he

wrote twice a week. His favourite poem was Kipling's *If*, an illuminated copy of which adorned the wall of his study where we took tea with him one day, along with a copy of Hoffman's boy Christ among the Pharisees, a pretty girl in sport clothes, drawn by Neysa McMein, and photographs of all his family. The author that he thought he ought to like, and did really like in his more exalted and intellectual moments, was Henry Van Dyke, but for ordinary purposes he preferred the belated copies of the *Saturday Evening Post* which strayed into Foo-chow now and then via the South China merchant line.

He spent much of his spare time on the veranda of the house where Dorothy was staying, remarking, to her annoyance, that he liked to go there to play with the kids, the only other kid being a curly-headed midget of three. Whereupon Dorothy, half teasing and half challenging, adopted herself into his family as his "sister," assuming all the prerogatives of kinship. Once when she captured his book of snapshots, and pursued him with persistent and public questions about all the faces of all the girls therein, I heard him exclaim, "Cut it out, Dorothy. Gee, and to think that I prayed for a little sister once!"

Dorothy, of course, as she often said, never intended to marry, and had put the ordinary foolishness of mate-hunting maidens quite out of her life. She intended to devote herself to a career, though she had not yet decided whether it would be as a surgeon or a prima donna. But meanwhile she saw a chance of doing good in the world by a supervisory regard for Harold's conscience, appearance, and manners, and sometimes she even condescended to that pretty air of wifely co-operation which is more characteristic of affairs of this sort before the

age of twenty than afterwards. When Harold wrote his bi-weekly letter to his mother, she would sit by him, cross-legged on the floor of the veranda, and would add postscripts and wishes of good health. When he wrote to his bachelor brother, these additions would grow rather longer and more vivacious, and she would even permit Harold to add a snapshot of herself. She was especially solicitous about the correspondence with the "girl back home," to whom she always sent the friendliest of greetings. Inferring that there must be a picture of this damsel extant, she cordially invited Harold to bring it over. He accepted the invitation—poor fatuous youth! After commenting on it with studied generosity, she coolly absconded with it. Nor did all his entreaties prevail to recover the prize. She said she liked it so much that she was keeping it for a while.

While Dorothy was thus preoccupied, I discovered the Infant Casualty.

We called him the Infant Casualty because he had been killed in a mock European war held by the little boys at the Anglican School for the Blind. I mention him only as a prelude to a tale of gore which had something less of grace about it.

When his corpse was found upon the battle-field, he was promptly resurrected by a Red Cross physician, also Chinese, and very small and blind. So impressed was he by his own revival that he insisted that, thereafter, he must be a Red Cross physician, too. So the next time they played European War, in the little courtyard surrounded by the shops where they were learning trades for self-support, he appeared in a white uniform and a hat adorned with the Red Cross. He could not see his own glory, nor could his blind companions, but he was just as pleased as any little boy with eyes. And

I, to whom this charming school, set in the damp fragrance of mountain lilies for all the world like our annunciation lilies of Easter time, was the most delightful retreat in Foochow, found the meek little yellow face in the midst of this snowy regalia quite irresistible. "Mother," the plump, warm-hearted British woman in charge of the school, had said that their battles might be as mock as they pleased, but the life-saving must be real. So she had made the game a genuine course in first aid. In time the Infant Casualty's vague little hands grew really skilful, and he knew many things about first aid which are not known to little American boys with eyes.

Great and terrible were those battles in which the Infant Casualty officiated. There was stirring music by the school band. The two sides rushed together, not fiercely like little boys who can see, but groping a little with their hands. They met. They fell in a heap, with groans and shouts and giggles. Suddenly, as things grew desperate, the Red Cross would charge upon them and dramatically save the lives of everybody.

One day while I was watching this perennial performance, one little soldier really got hurt. It was just a sprained ankle and a bruised arm. The Infant Casualty rose to the occasion and doctored him like a professional. It was his first real case. For the moment he was a hero, and all the armies acclaimed him. He began to boast of his future prowess as a mature practitioner.

We left him lording it over the courtyard and his admiring companions. Meanwhile there was music in the chapel, and Mother and I rested there a moment, to chat quietly outside of the reach of the children. One little blind boy was playing the organ while another sang in English:

Sunset and evening star
And one clear call for me;
And may there be no moaning of the bar
When I put out to sea.

Clear and sweet—and a little melancholy—the boy soprano rang out. What it meant to him I do not know, perhaps only what the song means to the bird. There was something odd and haunting in the pitch of his voice, something quaint in the pronunciation of the English words. He sang, it seemed, with all his heart, straining an eager little face against the curtain of his darkness, carried along on the current of his own melody.

The door opened. In came the Infant Casualty, groping his way to the music. His face was a little pallid and tired, all the triumph gone out of it. As he felt his way toward the singer, he suddenly touched something large, soft, and warm. A lap, a capacious, warm lap! With a sigh of weariness he clambered into it, and laid his head on her shoulders. "Mother" put her arms around him. A look of unutterable comfort overspread his face, and his body relaxed into stillness. There may be such a thing as Oriental stoicism, and the glory of medicine is very great—but for him, he was only a little boy, and arms like that were a good place in which to sleep.

In such simplicities the days at Foochow passed by, and still the waters walled us from the world, and the fogs rose daily in lieu of the sun, and strangled every venture.

CHAPTER VIII

A GORY CONCLUSION

ONE morning out of the mists there came a little ship. How she docked I do not know, for the river was a flood; but there she was, cheerful and pert, inviting him who would to rent half a mouldy cabin. No prize, indeed, but I was bored and missionary enterprises dragged. So it happened that I was floating off into the fogs, alone and unchaperoned, with many promises to meet the Bishop and Dorothy again in some corner of the North—Shanghai, perhaps, or Peking, or Korea.

Slipping out of the rain, but not out of the mists, we made a preliminary detour to the south to collect some cargo, and came into another river and the harbour of another little town.

It was really a most innocent looking town. Washed by the floods of a misty blue river, folded in by blue hills where generations of ancestors slept in grassy graves, and where sometimes a flock of white birds would pass, like magnolia flowers borne on the breeze, it seemed a refuge from wars and revolutions and all the strife of the world. What matter how the negotiations proceeded between the two Chinese governments at Canton and Peking; what matter what the young lions of the China press reported of the sayings of Doctor Sun Yat-sen, the southern intellectual, and what the man in Peking who said he was president of China, replied? What matter even if that northern general did say he was coming down to give these southern bandits something to

use their old guns on. What matter even if the Japanese looking jealously across from Formosa to these lovely shores, should come and take a hill or two as a good place to plant a cannon? What matter if the poison they relentlessly injected was eating the life out of a people once so great? Here the lives of men seemed to move in bland unconcern among the springing rice, and the city seemed to wear the mists and the verdure of the hills as armour against noise and warfare. The only stirring thing about the place was our ship, except, of course, the gambling hells. A few junks drifted in from upstream. Quaint, clumsy boats they were, well-guarded with such angels and ministers of grace as are known to the Chinese, with those great eyes that keep watch upon the river-world painted upon their prows.

Sometimes ingenious saffron beings from these ships would board ours with handicrafts of China done up in linen sheets. The sheets would fall apart. There was the silk lacquer of Foochow, delicate as bubbles and coloured like gems. There was brass that sounded like sweet bells, and tea-spoons beautifully fashioned out of soft white silver. There, too, was the lovely embroidery of Swatow, infinitely patient and delicate. The proprietors of these pretty things bowed, gesticulated, smiled, and scattered a few words of English, and the distribution of my petty cash among them became a drama that I was loth to cut short. So they took possession of our deck and squatted there all day, with their gleaming treasures spread out on the sheets before them.

Besides these obliging venders there were only two other phenomena to engage our attention during the thirty-six hours we spent in that river. One was a mysterious figure in white who appeared on shore and

seemed to be scraping or digging in the ground. On the night of our arrival he worked far into the dusk, his white garments gleaming like the raiment of some ghostly grave-digger. White is the colour of mourning in China, and so rare among the costumes of the usual throngs that it sets its wearer off with melancholy distinction. Once or twice when we questioned the venders about this personage, they grew embarrassed and said nothing, only looking at us and at the moving gleam of white on shore, with that terrible smile with which the Oriental hides his sorrow and his secrets.

The other excitement of the town was the music of the gambling hells. It went on all day, an outrageous babel of sound. It resembled bagpipes playing no tune in particular to the accompaniment of a lively beating of tin pans. Sometimes the music was interrupted with shots. These we took to be merely part of the general entertainment, like the noise of Fourth of July.

After we had exhausted the possibilities of the landscape, the junks, the venders, and the ghostly wearer of white raiment, we visited the gambling hells. They did not look like haunts of vice. They were camouflaged in fluttering, multicoloured tissue-paper covered with hieroglyphics. From carved galleries projecting over the streets cheerful people looked down upon us.

We entered the most select of these places. It was clean, or rather not particularly unclean. All about there was a certain amount of carved furniture and some very fine porcelain jars. On the walls were atrocious imitations of foreign lithographs representing Chinese maidens in trousers—rouged, smirking, shameless. Around a fan-tan table was gathered a great crowd of coolies in blue, interspersed with a sprinkling of portly gentlemen in black brocaded silk. The proprietor came

to greet us. Top-side people like us, it seemed, did not belong in those nether regions. At that minute a swinging basket full of money descended from the ceiling. We looked up. There, peering down through a hole in the roof, were faces and faces. They belonged to the élite—those who would not condescend to gamble on the same level with the proletariat.

This company of the select we joined and looked down upon the multitude. Plutocrat and beggar alike were bland and cheerful gamblers. Here and there a face looked strained; but there was not the obvious gambler's passion that one sees, for instance, in a Filipino cockpit. Many of them risked their last penny quite blithely. There was a vague odour of opium about the place, but no one seemed to be doped.

Then came the shots. The gamblers merely glanced at each other as much as to say, "Another one," and returned to the fan-tan.

"What is it?" I asked. "A man killed?"

"Not one," answered a man who spoke a little English indifferently. "Two-three-four—maybe ten."

"Why?"

"Me not know. To-day live; to-morrow die. War in China."

"Is there war here, in this town?"

"To-day here, to-morrow, other places."

"Do you mean to say that men are being killed all around you, and you pay no attention?"

"China bad country. Once good, now bad. Many men kill."

Thereupon he returned to his fan-tan, and I could elicit no further information.

More shots! The Chinese were impassive. "Probably soldiers practising," we said.

We returned to our ship on the misty blue river. The ingenious saffron beings were in full possession of the deck. Suddenly they seemed to stiffen. One of them pointed to a procession approaching on shore, a dejected rabble led by a squadron of soldiers.

"In this place much shooting," he said, with that ghastly smile whose meaning in the Orient one quickly comes to know. I looked at him closely. It was odd: he looked to me like the man I had talked to in the gambling hell.

The Captain explained rapidly in a low voice: "I've learned about these fellows on board. They are revolutionists. At least they belong to the party that isn't ruling in this town now, whatever that may mean. There's no real government in these southern provinces, you know, though there are a lot of radicals, malcontents, and idealists in Canton who are trying to make one with the help of the Japanese. A lot of the party to which these men belong have been captured. I don't know what they want. They are only pretending to be merchants from another town."

"What are you going to do about it?"

"Nothing," said he. "It's not my quarrel."

Then he lifted his glass. "What is happening on shore?" he exclaimed.

I lifted my glass also, though a moment later I wished that I had not. At a signal from the soldiers the dejected looking rabble lined up against the godown. The soldiers lifted their guns. There was a report. The line of men fell limp, crumpled like rag dolls. They were all dead. It was so rapid, so matter-of-fact, so sordid! A wave of horror and sickness passed over me—a feeling impossible to describe, in its crude, brute disgust—as if some wall of inner control were broken

by the sight, and, in that momentary hysteria, the very dregs and sewerage of unconscious life were washing unchecked over the helpless soul.

The soldiers passed on. Creatures in white lifted the bodies and placed them in white boxes. Then, lifting these coffins on their shoulders, in the same business-like way in which the soldiers had despatched lives, they, too, walked on.

When we turned, we found our decks empty of all but us. The ingenious saffron beings had vanished, including my friend of the gambling hell. Had they used our ship as a means of seeing the execution? We did not know. Afar on the river we saw the outlines of their fleeing junks. Then, in the twilight that man reappeared whose white form the shadows called forth nightly. When our ship sailed down the river, on its way out to sea, we saw him still, a lonely, indefatigable figure. We knew his function now. It was his business to spread lime over the bloody spot where the dead had fallen.

* * * * *

So we slipped into the swinging seas of the China coast, with much to dream of and much more to see among the bamboos and golden-roofed palaces to the north. My days of apprenticeship in Oriental traveling were over, and paths of more independent adventure were opening before me. But of this I was not yet aware; for crises do not often announce themselves in our life. They come quietly amidst a welter of small events, and it is only afterwards that we see clearly the pattern of our days.

BOOK TWO

CHAPTER IX

AN ALUMNÆ REUNION

I WAS alone in Shanghai. Somewhere in the hot mists of Fukien, Dorothy was breaking the heart of the Y. M. C. A. Beatrice, the lady of India, and the comrade Japan gave to me for life were as yet unmet. It was just a dirty, busy city that held no friends for me. How could I perceive that this was but the threshold of experience, or guess the sweetness that time treasured for me against my coming into places whose names, as yet, I scarcely knew?

Yet, as I look back upon the solitary interim between my parting with Dorothy and her dear daily foolishness, and the beginning of the chain of events that forms the somewhat belated plot of this book, I see a gallery of strange womanly figures—Cinderella and the Outlaw Brides, and lastly one who comes in all the regalia of queenship. Like the Sphinxes that stand in a long procession before an Egyptian temple, they guard the portals of my story; nor would it be quite complete without the shadow of their darker loves.

But those first days in Shanghai no friendly face of a daughter of Eve presented itself and I saw the life of the city alone. By day it was uninteresting enough—hybrid, and noisy, and hot. But at night it would bloom into gaiety. Upper stories and balconies, unobtrusive by day, sprang into life and light and music. Chinese gentlemen arrayed in long grey silk robes, short black silk jackets, and occidental straw hats walked by, wav-

ing fans. Emancipated Chinese flappers in blue silk trousers and pink hair ribbons promenaded by twos and threes, giggling, chattering, and looking not unprepared for flirtation in occidental style. The Chinese branch of the Grundy family has its own trials with "these wild young people" these days, and suffers quite as keenly as other scandalized elders of our day. So desperate has the conduct of young women become that the Commissioner of Education in Shanghai has found it necessary to make a rule that no flapper shall bob her hair or marry without her parents' consent.

Through the narrow streets, beneath the blazing balconies and the swinging hieroglyphic signs, the crowds surged in a steady rhythmical current, murmurous, smiling, intent, their goal of pleasure casting anticipatory gleams of brightness over their faces and even the silks of their dress. And the chorus of their myriad voices, the t-rrrrrr of the rickshaw bells, the honk honk of the automobiles, the screams of the coolies, and the curses of the Sikhs, were all caught, as it were, in the barbarous swirl of the tea-house music which harmonized all to its own dissonance. Meanwhile from every cook shop and kitchen the odours of cookery steamed upon the evening air, as if the whole metropolis were one vast chop suey.

Sometimes—on night-ventures—my taste led me to a place where the old Chinese drama competed stridently with the counterfeits of the present. Here, on a long bare stage, the Tai Ping rebellion was being enacted among imaginary hills and valleys with a great prancing of invisible horses. For an old Chinese play calls for the exercise of that airy faculty which Shakespeare invoked, and the fashioning of all properties and trappings out of the treasures of

the mind. The scenery is indicated through the actions of the characters. A certain kind of walk shows that the characters are climbing hills, in which case you supply a mountain landscape out of your own imagination. An outward swing of the leg implies that a man is mounting a horse and riding off. It is astonishing how quickly the mind makes the necessary adjustment, supplying all the form and splendour of imagined scenery almost as readily as one translates the signs of the alphabet into words. But the fighting scenes were quite realistic, and came as near murder as the law allowed, to the vast delight of the audience to whom these were the *raison d'être* of pictured history.

But for every one who looked at the Tai Ping rebellion, there were a hundred who crowded into some great motion picture hall. A huge enclosure of darkness, without seats, lit with gleams of light from the picture at the far end of the room, and the glitter of a thousand eyes in the shadows, fixed in passionate absorption, an utter oneness of gazing—that theatre represented such a concentration of humanity as I have never seen, a vision of human beings become one flesh, of bodies that had lost all boundaries, joined and merged in one odorous, steaming, throbbing mass. And yet it could not be offensive, that terrible massing of crowds, because of the beating of hearts one could feel in that darkness, and the flutter of stifled souls.

Yet I confess that it was with a sense of release that I emerged again beneath the cool stars amidst the lights of a great amusement garden. Here among the shrubbery and the gravelled walks, a ferris wheel was climbing to the stars, watched by hundreds of eyes in which fear of the eerie journey fought with desire. Every time

a passenger alighted he was hailed with question and congratulation, like one returning from Mars, and as each one ventured forth and upward, he received a send-off like one who goes to tilt with the planets. But beneath, in the glare of these sophisticated lights of the wheel, a tiger slept in his cage, breathing as gently as a baby, and stirring with feeble restlessness in his dreams. And in the softness and relaxation of the great brute there was the pathos that belongs to all sleeping life, and stirs the coldest heart to deep, obscure impulses of tenderness and affection; and here and there some Chinese turned from the swinging marvels all around to gaze through the bars of his cage with gentle and sober eyes.

But such incursions into others' gaiety only whetted my taste for something that lay as yet undefined in my unconscious—for a taste of the flesh-pots of society perhaps, for paths of experience that were really my own, or it may be for that undiscovered companionship, that possible guest in every gathering, that unknown host beyond each threshold who is the unacknowledged magnet of youth when it goes adventuring. Practical plans of research and writing were now in my mind, definite as a map or a guide book; and out of my more nebulous thoughts Peking emerged as a dream and a goal. There was the vanquished splendour of the old empire, and the focus of the hopes of to-day—the story of the past and the vision of the future, writ large in stone and treasure. To Peking I would go.

While the practical details of this purpose were maturing, I stopped at Cook's office one afternoon to collect my mail. The first note I opened was in Dorothy's large, rapid, and fluent handwriting.

"My dear," she wrote, "I am wild to see you. I have

wonderful news to tell you. Oh, no, not about the Y. M. C. A. Nothing doing, there—it's quite *passé*!" etc. . . . She proceeded with elaborate instructions for me to join them in Korea in a month or six weeks; and ended with fervent promises to tell me "all about it." What *it* was I had not gathered, nor did I ever expect to learn. I knew that, whatever it might be, six weeks of Dorothy's swift young life would make it prehistoric.

Yet the effect of this breezy transference of Dorothy's personality to paper was to plunge me deeper into a morass of loneliness. It was the mood in which desperate deeds are born. An enclosure in the next letter provided temptation and the instrument in the shape of a gold draft. Half idly, with no really serious purpose, except that of hypnotizing myself with hope, I said to the agent in Cook's office:

"Do you think you could get me a passage to India by the end of the summer?"

"I doubt it," he answered.

His tone annoyed me. I began to argue with him. Another clerk entered the discussion. And the end was that I deposited ten pounds on a ticket to India, sagely reflecting that this was as good a bank as any, since the money could be refunded, and childishly enjoying the sight of a rather nebulous dream confirmed in black and white on a receipt for the money. Somewhat cheered by this foolhardy performance, and promising myself to put in an application for the extension of my passport at the office of the Consul-General before I left for Peking, I turned down the Bund in a rickshaw. There have been many acts which I have performed with more forethought and sobriety of purpose than that application for passage to India but few, I think, so fraught with consequences.

The Bund is the avenue that fronts the sea, and is the fashionable promenade of Shanghai. Up and down it surges a wondrous pageant of humanity, samples of all races of men, Chinese, Japanese, Europeans, Americans, and men of all colours and degrees from the Pacific isles. Rickshaws and antique coaches rub elbows with shining Rolls Royces and sometimes make way for wagons drawn by long chains of coolies, who sing with a kind of rhythmical grunting as they move. Beyond, in the harbour, sway the masts of the river junks, thick as a bamboo forest.

I looked forth on the surging crowds—at the gay English ladies with big hats and parasols; at the Chinese ladies, hatless, trousered, rouged; at the little Chinese schoolgirls with long bangs in their eyes; at the great turbaned Sikhs with guns, presiding over the crossing in lieu of traffic cops. To be alone in an alien metropolis often induces a curious detachment, melancholy, arid, acquiescent—a suspension of feeling and thought, nay, even, it seems, of life itself. For we are conscious of our own life mainly through its reflection in others like ourselves, and to be deprived of all the familiar images which express your life to yourself is to be, for the time, robbed of being. And one who has known long loneliness in a strange land falls into a kind of maze—a state neither of joy nor sorrow nor even of hope in which everything about him recedes into more and more distant perspective of unreality.

Something of this deathly enchantment had fallen upon me that afternoon. It seemed only a picture through which I rode; they were not, they could not be real—these thousands of strange beings, these men and these women. It could not be that I was really there, in that strange city—I—I—who was I? My mind clung

uneasily to this question that has no answer, as a swimmer in deep water may cling to a floating bit of slippery wood.

"Marjorie," cried a voice that called me back into life like the trump of the resurrection. "What are you doing in Shanghai?"

I could only search the face before me feverishly, anxiously, as if this were one of the hallucinations of the solitary, and murmur her name, "Edna." How astonishing that she should stand there in the flesh, her very self, rosy, freckled, a little matronly, her breezy, red hair blown in tendrils about her candid sweet face. For we had been classmates in college. In the soft twilight of our Commencement Day, amidst the wrecks of pennants, tea-sets, and sofa-cushions, we had vowed eternal fealty, and a monthly exchange of letters. The letters had never come, nor any news. Now the years fell suddenly away, and here, amidst the press and crush of this Oriental throng, we stood face to face, friends and chums, as if it were all but yesterday.

Dismissing our rickshaws with a lavish fee for the whole afternoon, we hailed a double-seated carriage in which we could sit side by side and pour out the autobiographical details which had brought us to this meeting in Shanghai. She was married. I smiled at the news, as one receiving congratulations on her own handiwork. I had sacrificed a good many hours of my young beauty sleep settling Edna's matrimonial future in midnight confidences.

"Is it Harry?" I asked complacently, prepared to receive the just rewards of my labours.

"Harry?" She puzzled over the name, remembered it at last, and laughed, "I had quite forgotten."

Crestfallen, I listened and learned the limits of con-

fidence in friendship, even in college. All the while I was expending my best efforts on Harry, there was another, a shy young instructor in Economics. I remembered him?

"Yes, but I never supposed—"

"Of course not," said Edna, laughing. But she had the grace to explain. He was an instructor. It being bad form for instructors to flirt with students, she had kept all the preliminaries a secret lest they should somehow get about and jeopardize his position. "You know how it was. Marriage was all right in a serious young professor who mysteriously appeared after summer vacation with a bride. But courtship that any one knew about was taboo."

A simple little academic romance and destined, it seemed, to blossom in the safe prosaic fields of home! But one day Robert had got a chance to go out to an American college in India on a three year contract. Everybody warned them. "Edna," said her old Sunday school teacher, "it's an awful heathen land where widows burn themselves and people all suffer from caste and other dreadful diseases." But they were fired with the adventure of it, and put all their small savings into the preparations. All went well till they got to Shanghai. By that time the war had begun. The British government was getting anxious about India and its loyalty. Every one who entered India from any foreign country to teach or to preach must be carefully examined for unorthodox doctrines. So Robert and Edna were both detained in Shanghai for three months while the British government probed into Robert's intellectual past. All the while their money dwindled, and the day of the birth of Edna's baby drew near. At the end of that time they were refused admission to India. Some

hints of pacificism and the self-determination of peoples had been found in Robert's contributions to Political Science quarterlies. The money was almost gone. They moved from poor lodgings to poorer ones. The baby was born in a mission hospital. There was not even money left for doctor's bills, and none for passage home.

But the missionaries came to the rescue. Robert got an opportunity to teach biology in the Baptist College. "It is all right now," concluded Edna, between a smile and a sigh. "But I don't know whether we will ever see home again or not."

Meanwhile I must come out to-morrow and spend the day and myself witness the conclusion of her romance. With that promise we parted. Loneliness was banished. I went to sleep that night in a private jubilee of memory and expectation.

Next day I found the Baptist college in the suburbs of Shanghai, a group of gaunt red buildings set in the midst of green grass and sunshine, beside the pale floods of a muddy river. As I drew near to the little bungalows which clustered in the shade of the larger buildings, I saw men in khaki, with guns on their shoulders, running from all directions. Edna came down the gravel walk to meet me, and kissed me warmly.

"I never expected to see you to-day," she said.

Then she explained. There was excitement in Shanghai which I had missed. Coolies who were suffering from not ill-founded grievances were rioting, attacking the street-cars and the buildings in the foreign settlement. The volunteers were all called out. Though the more liberal-minded of them sympathized with the Chinese in the quarrel, as white men they must stand together for self-defence. The claims of justice must wait on peace.

"Which," said Robert, in his capacity of economist, "is really a fallacy, and one which is responsible for a good many wrongs in the Orient."

Yet, despite these opinions, he, too, was in khaki.

"Just the same," said Edna, kissing her warrior good-bye, as the street car appeared to bear the army to the scene of action, "when you are ordered to kill a Chinese, just aim at the telegraph pole."

As for the rest of that sweet day—I do not know how to bring to the reader who has not known the antecedent mood the beauty of its small details or the poetry of its commonplaceness.

Edna's home was of a type that abounds in the inexpensive suburbs of America—a cheerful, cleanly little bungalow, with a screened and vine-covered veranda, a lawn and a gravelled walk, and, behind it, a little vegetable garden. All morning we puttered around on small domestic tasks. These were necessarily limited in scope and direction, for a Chinese "boy" presided in the primitive Chinese kitchen at the back of the house, and, humble as Edna's purse was, as a white woman in China she belonged to the caste that is set apart from manual toil in feudal sanctity. In lands where servants are not yet anachronisms, they cling to their prerogatives as tenaciously as lords. Edna's dignity might have survived the cooking of her own dinner, but the cook's never would. But we were permitted to gather string beans in Edna's own vegetable garden, where she had planted seeds imported from America, and where no Chinese gardener might enter to contaminate the earth. It was bordered with nasturtium flowers, that gleamed like gay embroidery against a clump of bamboos, and flavoured the sunshine with their spicy breath. Afterwards, clothed each in a gingham apron that had ac-

quired an exotic glory in my eyes, we prepared the beans, sitting in housewifely fashion on the screened veranda with tin pans imported from Wanamaker's, by mail order, in our laps. Outside, the wide fertile fields lay still and rich in the sunshine, and the creatures that sing among the summer grass buzzed with a thousand voices. The ways of the good earth never change. She but alters her dress from land to land, but never her voice and the light in her eyes. We might have been two housewives on a farm-house porch in Ohio. The vistas of green and the hum of the summer morning would have been the same—and the tin pans and the beans. And in that perception I found both mystery and comfort. So we gardened and chattered and fed, in maternal partnership, her spluttering, crowing, red-haired baby. And beyond this, that happy day, like the days of a happy nation, has no history.

And yet there was history after all, and in the memorial peace of this narrative, I have almost forgotten it. For as the somnolence of noon-tide wakened to the touch of a little breeze that came rippling to us over bending blades of rice, Edna suggested a walk among the villages. So it happened that we discovered the little creature whom we named Cinderella of the bamboos.

CHAPTER X

CINDERELLA OF THE BAMBOOS

SHE lived in a little house of woven bamboo, amid the sunny shimmer of bamboo leaves. The bamboo was one of many clumps in the midst of a lush, waterfed countryside which looked like a Dutch landscape, rolling away to meet billowing clouds on the low horizon, and lighted by the calm light of pools and rivers and canals without currents or waves. It seemed a dainty place, that clump of bamboos. As we drew near along a winding path through the rice-fields, the bamboo swarmed with life. Out of it poured streams of brown, beady-eyed people with uncombed pigtails, vociferating, threatening, like a hive of wild bees disturbed in the forest. They seemed strangely like animals, and despite Edna's limited Chinese, we were inadequate to the social situation.

Then up rose the headman of the village, for these lairs among the bamboos formed a village, and no doubt a very old village, with a history stretching back through ages of unrecorded time. The headman of the village said to the croaking multitude: "Are you dogs? Are you beasts? Do you not know what these queer things are? They are foreign devils. They are kings of China now, and must be treated with respect."

The people slunk away. But thereafter the bamboos seemed to grow eyes, and we were haunted by beady orbs of beings invisible. We followed the headman as he bowed us down a muddy trail into a little house woven

like a basket. Would we come in? Within, there was a screaming and cackling, and out toddled a drove of women and children. This was the headman's family, the wives of his sons and his sons' sons, and all the adopted children that he could afford to include among the worshippers at the altar of the ancestors. They all lived together in the primitive shack without windows, and the little children played on the damp dirt floor with the animals. Beaming, they invited us in to inspect their dwelling. They even produced from the smoky, dusty débris within one foreign chair with three legs, which they dusted and set down for us with a flourish.

Then they proceeded to introduce the family. Here I at once became conscious of a peculiarity of the Chinese social order even in a form as primitive as this. Within the family there is a distinct difference in social status. The old grandmother was mistress of ceremonies. She was a neat old woman in tiny red shoes. Her claim to social supremacy I understood. Beyond that, I was helpless. I smiled upon a pretty young thing standing modestly by. There was a stir of embarrassment in the group. Evidently I had made a *faux pas*. Ah, she was the wife of a younger son and had no children. I tried again, or began to try; for suddenly my eyes fell on a little bundle of rags in the corner, out of which peered the oddest, wildest, most suffering grey-brown eyes I had ever seen. They seemed to belong to some unidentified species of animal.

"What a nice little girl!" I exclaimed. This was a fib. It was not a nice little girl at all, but I wanted to see what it was.

Forthwith there was a flurry. Another *faux pas*, and decidedly worse than the other! I was evidently hopeless. The grandmother sprang to the rescue and pro-

duced the person I should notice—a plump, complacent young woman swaying on her bound feet, under the weight of a vast, bulbous babe. She set the baby down on its unsteady elephantine legs, and the whole family beamed, and looked to me for congratulations. She was the wife of the eldest grandson, and she had produced *that*. Was *that* not cause for congratulation?

My eyes wandered back to those suffering sparks of light in the corner where Cinderella crouched in rags. “May I take her picture?” I asked. Another *faux pas*—a fatal one! The family buzzed. I should have asked for the picture of the bulbous babe. It was out of the question to take Cinderella’s picture. She was only a little slave-girl bought for one of the younger sons. I protested; I entreated; I made up a thousand reasons why I should have Cinderella’s picture.

The others merely turned to her, taunting her. What was she doing, crawling around to get some notice from foreign devils! Meanwhile the old grandmother, with decision, stood the bulbous babe up on his shaky legs against his complacent mother and indicated that *there* was a subject worthy of my lens.

Thinking to get Cinderella later when no one was looking, I at last yielded and wasted two films on that little lump of yellow flesh, blinking at me with blank eyes. When I turned, Cinderella was gone, and all the Chinese in Edna’s possession would not elicit a remark concerning her, nor even an admission that she existed and that we had seen her.

Yet, as we were picking our way out through the ill-smelling débris which surrounded the house, we came, amidst a clump of bamboos, upon a stone coffin, in the cracks of which flowers like dandelions were growing. For a minute I had an odd feeling that the suffering



The mother of the bulbous babe indicated that *there* was a subject worthy of my camera



She seemed to remember that life was not always like this



Patrician girls learned English and foreign manners through
the medium of Shakespeare



The slum children looked upon the fair mandarin daughters
with unconscious cynicism

grey eyes of Cinderella were looking at me from that coffin. Then there was a rustle among the bamboos and some one was gone. Edna seemed to notice nothing, but as we walked home in the rosy light of the low sun, she remarked, "Do you know what I think about her?"

"What?"

"She has white blood."

As we turned into the college grounds, with the melancholy of this encounter still upon us, a pretty little figure came skipping down the path, and flung herself ardently into Edna's arms. She was the quaintest little girl that ever my eyes beheld. Her silhouette was that of a smart little American miss, with frilly, starched skirts, and bobbed hair tied with a big pink bow. But her skin and her features were Chinese. Introduced as "our Leila," she began chattering about her kittens, her "mother," and "the Chinese." Of these last she spoke with that air of superiority which little white children, despite all teaching to the contrary, so quickly adopt in the Orient, and which is fostered by the Oriental servants themselves.

Afterwards Edna explained that she had been left as a tiny baby—so tiny that her squinting eyes were still blue, not black, and her skin had not yet grown yellow—on the doorstep of one of the American teachers. Mrs. Brown had taken her in out of kindness, intending to turn her over to a missionary orphanage so soon as the arrangements could be made. But she had so quickly developed into a bright and winning baby, and had so effectively entwined herself around the hearts of a childless household, that, by the time the slant-eyed little creature was six months old, Mrs. Brown could not be separated from her. And when the first words that she uttered were "Daddy," and "Mamma," with an Ameri-

can intonation, she had been adopted as a little daughter. It had delighted the whole community to see the little thing with her alien looks taking on all the ways of her American guardians. Never had a child been more tenderly reared, more exquisitely dressed. She was now seven years old, a clever, demonstrative, loving little creature, full of pranks and winning ways. Though she was beginning to dislike the fact that her hair was so black, and her eyes not large and blue like those of her "parents," she did not yet know that she was really Chinese and not American.

She skipped all the way home with us, chattering like a little sparrow. Then, seeing in the distance some one else whom she knew, she ran away to throw herself into another pair of welcoming arms.

"Isn't she darling?" said Edna.

I admitted that she was, but I looked upon her with pity and questioning. What was to happen when she carried those pretty ways beyond the safety of seven years into the dangerous contacts of seventeen? Some day some one's arms would want to welcome a creature so graceful and loving to more than paternal guardianship, and then what cross currents of race and environment would enter in, what shadows of unknown ancestors and potential creatures to be would arise like unlaidd ghosts. Then I thought of that poor little troubled thing in the hut among the bamboos, hiding amidst the débris of that place to escape a blow and a taunt, looking out with tortured grey eyes that seemed vaguely to hold a memory of something that was not like this. She might have been such a little girl as Leila, so happy and so winsome.

I looked at Edna, at her fresh rosy colouring of pure Nordic type and serene courageous face. She had

spoken of hard times. But what did we know of tragedy—she and I? Were we not among the blessed—we who need not abandon hope at the very threshold of birth, nor carry our sorrow through life in our blood and the fibres of our flesh?

When I reached Edna's cottage, there was a telephone message to the effect that all was now quiet in Shanghai, and I might venture back. Again, in the twilight, we clasped hands and said good-bye. We did not promise undying fealty nor correspondence without limits. But I carried away a heart warm with the renewal of old memories, and as I sped through the freshening dusk to the far lights of Shanghai, the chorus of the frogs in the rice-pools lifted up their voices in the strain that knows neither location nor time. Just so had they chanted at evening on the marshy borders of our college lake—an accompaniment to romances that seemed timeless then and were forgotten now—and perhaps Adam had known their song when he walked with Eve in the garden. But as night wrapped around me the sweet familiarity of darkness, other faces were painted upon the canvas of that day of college memories, alien and haunting—the grey eyes of Cinderella, the bobbed hair of dainty Leila—heroines of half-told tales, fractions of lives whose end I may never know.

CHAPTER XI

OUTLAW BRIDES

WHEN I returned to my room, I found two notes awaiting me. One was a belated addition to the mail from the states, telling me to beware how I walked abroad in Shanghai, for it was a "most immoral city." The other was a note from one Mr. Sun and his wife, friends of the Bishop, who announced that they would come at seven o'clock to take me out to dinner. Here was a chance to take the warning seriously. But I did not, and I hasten to add that this is not a wily introduction, after the manner of the short-story writers, to a tale of exotic murder.

Promptly at seven Mr. Sun and his wife arrived in a dilapidated little carriage drawn by an elderly horse. Mr. Sun was a kind and portly Chinese in a frock coat. Mrs. Sun was a thin, eager little body, awkwardly westernized by a high-necked white blouse, a tailored black skirt, and a frizzed pompadour. In excellent, though unadventurous English, they welcomed me to a share in the carriage and we drove off.

A few minutes later I stood upon the threshold of a fashionable Chinese inn.

"Welcome to our outlaw band," cried a warm, cordial voice, and a comely white woman, with red-gold hair wound in braids around her head, clasped my hand with a sincerity and warmth which belied her theatrical manner.

"You look harmless," I ventured, smiling at what

was apparently the company of outlaws. A group of studious young Chinese were standing in a circle around a table covered with an Occidental white table cloth, and decorated with a large centrepiece of glass fruit. Besides our apparent hostess and Mrs. Sun, I was evidently to enjoy no feminine company.

"Oh," said the red-haired queen of the outlaws, in answer to my remark, "we are harmless—in fact a rather unusually virtuous lot. It's just that I used to be a missionary and am now excommunicated for heresy and an undue interest in the Chinese revolution, and these young men used to be proper sons of their fathers, and now they are anathema in their households and their cities, and are living in Shanghai, where, under British protection, they may safely plot the overthrow of the ancestors."

"Miss Burton is vivacious," said the suave voice of a Chinese next to me, "but it is true that we are all interested in the progress of China."

So was I, but I found it difficult to make the matter known. Thoughts grew cold and lost their savour, and feelings evaporated and left only the dregs of ennui, before we could translate them into the fraction of language we held in common. Though no doubt our feelings were more akin than our alphabets, upon our converse lay the curse of Babel.

Still, the courses of the dinner slipped by, twenty-four of them in number, and all to be consumed with chop sticks. The food was of the same general type as that which we know as chop suey,—more like an endless succession of savoury hashes and stews and entrées than the ponderous but highly differentiated courses of our meals. The *pièce de résistance* was sharks' fins, a tasteless, gelatinous delicacy, and toward

the end there came an almond-flavoured concoction of appalling sweetness.

"I don't know why you should give any further exhibition of gastronomical courage," remarked Miss Burton, suddenly. "It is now eleven o'clock, and I think I'll take you home to spend the night with me."

I demurred. I spoke of my lack of preparation for such an event, and the unsuitability of my garb to the morning light in which I should have to return. But she overbore my reluctance, laughing. Seizing my hand as she did so, she patted and pressed it with so warm and vital a touch that it magnetized me into submission. Then she proceeded, with lordly disregard of my protests, to order the carriage.

"This little girl comes, too," she said, suddenly drawing Mrs. Sun to her—who stood back looking a little shy and jealous, I thought, and Mrs. Sun, thus restored to grace, cuddled into the circle of the large, gracious white arm around her waist like a contented kitten.

So, before I had rightly collected my thoughts, the radical conclave of young men had bowed itself off, Mr. Sun had deposited us in a carriage with some flourish of Occidental chivalry, and we were riding out Bubbling Well Road beneath the skies of midnight.

Turning off into a dirt lane that ran through lonely meadows, now lying wide and silvery beneath the starlight and the dew, we stopped before a high garden wall. In answer to the coachman's knock the gate was opened about a quarter of an inch, and then thrown wide with a delighted cry of recognition, by a little old Chinese watchman who carried a kerosene lantern.

We followed him up a gravel path, between the dark, heavy, perfumed heads of blossoming roses, to the screened veranda. Here a Chinese girl emerged and

flung herself on Miss Burton's neck, while two or three others, seeing me, stood with more constraint and dignity in the doorway.

"You silly things," said Miss Burton, kissing each one of them, "why are you up at this hour?"

"Because we thought you might bring a nice guest," answered a slim, waxen-faced little thing, with luminous eyes, as she shook hands with me with Occidental ease.

But a tall flat-faced young woman with tortoise-shell glasses and a slower wit had already begun to confess that they had got into a dispute about the meaning of a passage of Tolstoi which they were reading, and had not noticed the hour. The third, a placid motherly girl, had already gone in search of some mango ice-cream to reinforce what she surmised to be my meagre indulgence in Chinese dainties.

Forthwith I was ushered into a most gracious room—a long low-ceilinged library, lined with book-cases, and furnished with blue Chinese rugs, a davenport, a mahogany desk, a steamer chair piled with cushions of Chinese silk and embroidery, some lacquer tables, and coloured reproductions of Fra Angelico in narrow gold frames. From every corner the gentle angels of the old saint blew their trumpets, and over the desk all Paradise was disporting itself upon large and starry flowers, at the feet of the pensive queen of Heaven.

Mrs. Sun and the other girls had now gathered in a circle around us, sitting on cushions on the floor, Mrs. Sun with her head in Miss Burton's lap. Despite the apparent dislike of the Chinese for our demonstrative ways, Miss Burton petted all the girls continually, and her warm electric touch and sweet smile seemed to work a charm upon them, breaking down the Oriental stiff-

ness that stands between the westerner and these eastern souls. While we ate the mango ice-cream, with almond cakes, she told me what they were all doing here in her pretty home.

It seems that they were girls who had been ostracized from their homes because of their adoption of foreign ways, and especially because of unpopular marriages. Mrs. Sun, "Topsy" (the little clever one, who knew how to shake hands), and "Tistie," who was concerned to understand Tolstoi, had all been indemnity students in the United States. Pearl, who looked so capable and motherly, had studied in a mission school in China, and was a trained nurse. "Tistie" had a master's degree from an American university.

Topsy's career of revolt had been blithe and decisive. Though in her town the anti-foot-binding movement had not yet reached the ranks of good society, her father had been a progressive and liberal man, with considerable contact with foreigners, and had always been opposed to deforming the feet. So her feet were not touched till she was fourteen. Then her father died, and her eldest brother succeeded as head of the house. He was conventional in the extreme, and took the responsibility of getting her a husband seriously. In the performance of this duty he felt himself sadly checked by her unfashionable feet. So it was decided that, difficult and painful as the hideous process was at her age, and hopeless as it was to think of getting her feet down to really elegant proportions, the torture must begin—an opinion in which her poor, tottering, twisted-backed mother entirely concurred. Whereupon Topsy picked herself up on her two serviceable feet and ran away. The freedom which her father had allowed her, together with a gay and resolute temper, served her in a perform-

ance in which ninety-nine per cent of Chinese girls would come to grief. Somehow, by some process of wit and witchery, she got to a mission school, and demonstrated her intention to stay there. The American missionaries would not have dared to hold her against the will of her family, but a Chinese teacher, one of those determined characters which the first years of a feminist revolt always breeds, adopted her and furnished funds for her schooling. She won an indemnity scholarship and went to college in America, where, during her senior year, she married a classmate, a brilliant young Chinese already known for his writings. They set up housekeeping in an apartment in the upper Bronx, and she enjoyed one glorious year, shopping in American style, going nightly to the theatre or to Greenwich Village parties, and collaborating with her husband in his studies and writings. His interests had temporarily brought them back to Shanghai. But they were intending to return to America shortly. She was merely visiting Miss Burton while her husband was in Peking. She told her story gaily, with no inhibitions and no regrets. She was one of those souls for whom revolt carries with it no agony of detachment, no prickings of conscience, nor homesickness for old ways. To her family she was as one dead. They held her funeral, when she absolutely refused to come back, and an obliging friend had said that her mother often wept for her.

"It is her punishment," said Topsy coolly. "She was too stupid! Not till she saw me crippled, humiliated, and bored to death in the house of a mother-in-law would her love be satisfied. I have chosen a love for my life, and it is not like that."

One could see that her words were salt in the wounds of the other girls, to whom rebellion came less easily.

They were less ready with their stories, and what I tell I merely surmised and pieced together. Mrs. Sun's tale was a simple one. She and her husband were not absolutely ostracized. Originally betrothed by their parents, they had mutually assisted each other, in devious and underground ways, to get a foreign education, and between them there was apparently a loyal affection, deep-rooted in childhood, though her grand passion for Miss Burton revealed something in her that, I think, her husband had not found. They had chosen to live in Shanghai, in semi-foreign style, and edited a little radical paper between them. His parents would take them back, provided they would conform to the ways of the patriarchal household. But she was not minded to make one of a half-dozen daughters-in-law under the rule of an old woman who had never been outside of her own garden. Nor was he interested in inheriting as a good son, and one of many brothers, what he felt to be the stupid machinery and senseless responsibilities of provincial Chinese life of the old style. Between them and the parents there existed that tentative and irritating intercourse which, in such cases, is worse than actual separation, each side trying to compromise, each trying to proselytize the other, each trying to make up in forced affection for difference in ideals. Ever and anon the parents sent them a present. Then, touched and humble, they would pay a state visit home. They would be stared at and pointed out in the village. The conversation with their brothers and sisters would be a series of pin-pricks. They would strain themselves against the vacuum between them in hypocritical and forced enthusiasms, and retire to Shanghai at last, weary and miserable.

"Damn tomfoolery, I call it," said Topsy. "Trying to

feed your soul on that kind of love between families is like chewing saw-dust for food. I tell you what—some time I will translate Butler's *Way of All Flesh* into Chinese, with Chinese characters and scenes and all, and you shall help me. It will be good for your soul."

At this remark Tistie stirred uneasily, started to speak, and thought better of it. Miss Burton had named her Tistie, a softened form of the word *statistics*, because of her studious love of facts and figures. She was one of those sober, unimaginative, duty-loving souls, who are happiest in the straight and simple course of convention, but who often find themselves placed in radical positions through sheer process of logic. With her parents' full consent, she had won an indemnity scholarship, and, after her undergraduate course was finished, had remained in America to take her Master's degree. There she engaged herself to a fellow student, but dutifully waited to return home and obtain her parents' consent before the marriage. But when he reached China, her lover found that his parents, who were somewhat liberal-minded, had so far fallen from grace as to arrange a marriage for him. This contract he promptly repudiated, saying that he would marry the girl whom he had chosen. Whereupon her parents, getting wind of the matter, refused to be a party to such a proceeding. At last, being a somewhat resolute young man, and not able to settle the matter through the intermediary of posts and friends, he did what his American training dictated, and came to call on his lady in her own village. In order to discuss the matter quietly they went walking together, a sober and proper stroll along the bamboo path by the canal. Though this was quite in accordance with the customs they had known through all the later days of their schooling, no proper Chinese

girl in an old-fashioned community goes walking with her betrothed, or even sees him before the wedding. Forthwith a scandal ensued. A little Chinese paper took the matter up, with the most vulgar insinuations. Both families felt absolutely disgraced and the girl's reputation was lost forever. To try to live it down in her own community was impossible. Her lover promptly married her in a little Methodist chapel, and they came to live in the British quarter of Shanghai. Here Miss Burton met Tistie and offered her a permanent position as her secretary and assistant in turning English books into Chinese. Tistie was a busy, efficient, earnest, scholarly girl, devoted to her work. But the imputation of scandal had left a scar in her memory, and not all her own reasoning, nor Miss Burton's reassuring friendship, nor Topsy's sarcasm could rid her of the shame of being publicly branded as a wanton.

I did not gather all this from her, save indirectly through arguments with Topsy. My scattered inferences were later confirmed and welded into a complete story by Miss Burton. As for Pearl, the other girl of the group, she was not married. She had chosen an even more difficult course than that of the outlaw brides; for she had elected, as a single girl, to devote herself to what we would call district nursing among the poor Chinese, and was agitating for the establishment of a hospital in foreign style in one of the cities near Shanghai. A simple, Christian girl, she shared none of the radical views of the others. She believed that daughters should devote themselves in childhood to their parents, and to their husbands and parents-in-law in maturity; that the family spirit of the Chinese had something beautiful in it and no selfish individualism should be allowed to shatter it; that, instead of break-

ing away from her home, an educated girl should, in general, remain there, and try to win over the others by the radiant argument of a beautiful, loving, and unselfish life.

"But you are not doing it," said Topsy.

"That is not the same," she answered in her slightly awkward English. "It is different. I am vowed to a great work, to the rescue of thousands of little children that die, and no mother's heart, though loving, intelligent, anywhere to care for them. And, like a nun, I must seek the kingdom of Heaven first—it is not for my own development, not for my freedom—it is for the great work, the terrible need."

"And yet your parents cast you out," said Topsy. "You cannot work from your home; you are more an outlaw than any of us."

"That is my cross," she answered quietly. "I love my parents and I pray for them, and one day, I am confident, the Lord Jesus will even grant that I may go home, and see my mother's face once again, before she die."

In the midst of these girls—only a few out of many who found temporary refuge, employment, advice, and comfort at her house—sat the woman who had made for herself so unique a life, her golden hair and fair rosy face glowing with irrepressible vitality. Ardent, vigorous, radical by every instinct, she had fallen into disgrace with the more conservative members of the mission because she was said to be teaching socialism, the doctrine of evolution, and the æsthetic beauty of the Catholic church along with the pure word of the gospel. Once she even spoke scornfully of some one who wished to translate *Pollyanna* into Chinese, suggesting Topsy's favourite, *The Way of All Flesh*, instead. But the Bishop

had come to her rescue and had found an opportunity for her to superintend the translation of western books into Chinese, both for the Christian Literature Society and for progressive Chinese publishing houses. The actual translation she felt unable to do, but she mapped out the scope of each book, condensed or expanded the English text as was required, and interpreted it to Chinese translators. She also wrote simple text-books on science and economics and social history to be translated. With a little patrimony of her own, she had bought this pretty house and settled down for life to an interesting and ever widening career. Her intense intellectual energy and warm, loving heart were apparently satisfied in being a city of refuge to all young Chinese who suffered for their ideas, and in dispensing her tasks of translation as a kind of informal endowment for progressive young China.

As I spoke with sympathy and hope of her work and theirs, the wonderful work of the awakening youth of these old lands, their speech fell into a graver cadence. There were other girls who were less lucky in revolt, they said. And they told me of one. She was a beautiful girl, wealthy and high-bred, nursed in the midst of gorgeous luxury, with servants at her bidding all day long, and jewelry enough to endow a school. She had all that money and love could give her except what she most longed for—a western education. For her parents had been foolish enough to get her a grand piano and to import a teacher from a mission school for rich mandarin girls to teach her to enjoy it. Among cultivated Chinese foreign music is rather fashionable—so fashionable, in fact, that instruction in the coveted art of the piano is the best bait of the mission schools. So it happened that this daughter of wealth learned much

besides the strange notes, and was filled with glorious romantic dreams of knowledge that lay beyond her garden walls. She begged her parents to send her to school, but they merely offered her presents and a husband, and finally compromised on a little tutoring in the Confucian classics. Her dreams thrived on the denial. The rumors of girls who went away to study in America became glorious possibilities to her mind. One day she stole forth, with all her jewelry done up in a square of linen, and, in a closed sedan-chair, started in the direction of Shanghai. How she got so far, they could not tell; for she knew nothing even of her own people, outside of her servants. What happened then no one knew. She had apparently told her ambitions to a Sikh policeman, and asked him where she could turn her jewels into money for passage to America. He took her with him, and that, for a time, was as much as her parents could discover. But there are detective forces in the Orient which, working informally, are quite as efficient as our own Secret Service. And one day this Dorothy Arnold of China was discovered—a doped and feverish wreck of her former self, swathed in Indian draperies like a Sikh woman, drugged almost beyond memory or recognition with opium. How many men, and who, had shattered the chastity which a Chinese woman cherishes as much as any woman on earth, no one could tell. In the utmost secrecy her parents had taken her home, and silence shrouded her. But she had regained some clarity of mind and memory now. Her friends, and even her family, thought that she was waiting for an opportunity to commit suicide, in accordance with the Chinese sense of honour in such cases, and gravely hoped that she would.

This led to a discussion of suicide among Chinese

women. And the midnight hours dragged on through a strange and tragic recital of the suicides that they knew of among girls who had received in some way a tincture of western ambition and learning, and ultimately had been thwarted by their parents and forced into unwelcome betrothal.

It was two o'clock before I stole off to bed at last, to dream but not to sleep. For into the midst of the memories of that strange and crowded day, there stole out of the heart of the night a ghostly voice of suffering. It was a Chinese mother calling back the soul of a little child who had died. Across the meadows it sounded above the chorus of frogs, through all the hours of darkness. For it is believed that the little soul lingers for some time in the presence of the mother, afraid to venture out into the untried paths of eternity. And if one speaks lovingly to it, it may perchance return, and enter again into the little unworn body and live out its days on earth safe in its mother's house. So all night long she called, and the cry was terrible upon the rose-scented night, till dawn came up, solemn and silvery and faintly scarlet. Then apparently the little ghost went its way, and the hopes of the mother vanished with the morning.

CHAPTER XII

HEART'S BITTERNESS

IN the confidences of the outlaw brides I had touched the springs of tears in this new hopeful life of the East. I uncovered them again when I went next day to dine with the daughters of the aristocracy in a Christian school for mandarin girls.

They were lovely creatures, these high-bred maidens, very different from the eager souls with whom I had conversed through the midnight hours. Their fair satin skin and long, smooth hair, the finished modelling and patrician calm of their young faces, the silken courtesy of their speech and manner, marked them as of the "classes." I learned the quality of the soul that could dwell behind that delicate exterior when "Miss Grace," an American teacher, brought out a little note-book written in English, which had been sent to the school by the parents of a favourite graduate who had died. No doubt she had used the alien language as a cipher with which to conceal her thoughts from her household. It was a diary, recording from day to day her struggles after perfection. Devout and cultivated men and women have written such documents in all ages, and perhaps there is nothing that reveals the innate distinction or vulgarity of a soul more clearly than these out-pourings. The diary of this girl, in its way, was not unworthy to stand with the best. Her moral standards were narrow, and at times even absurd. The effort and agony she spent on an at-

tempt to keep Sunday sacred in a household which did not recognize its existence was worthy of more constructive social effort. Of the true evils of the world, of the wrongs in the social scheme of things which make private virtue too often abortive, of the efforts toward social regeneration which interested the young feminists, she knew nothing—and nothing, too, of the great, raw temptations of life, of the forces which shake the moral foundations of being, and of that terrible, devastating white light which, in a crisis, may reveal the emptiness, the cruelty even, of the very ideals to which one has moulded and fashioned one's life in prayer and self-abnegation. Her religious faith was as private and exclusive as her social position. She had taken her ideals from the mission without criticism or question, and had made them fuel for a burning spirit. Written in the excellent, though slightly formal and archaic English of one who has learned the language well, but from books, she related the story of her inward self-discipline from day to day.

It was a record of leisure without peace, of comfort without contentment. In the beautiful house to which she had gone as a bride, she lived as an alien, estranged by her Christian faith and her western education from the life to which social custom dedicated her. There were summaries of lectures from her mother-in-law, a kindly, bustling, self-important old lady who obviously loved her, with an affection captious, reverent, and patronizing. Her love the good old woman expressed in a series of superstitious doses designed to hasten the advent of a baby son. This aroused the jealousy of another daughter-in-law, also childless, a vain little creature who in a house ruled by the mother-in-law had obviously the instincts of a "teacher's pet." But the mother re-

fused to be interested in the maternal career of this little butterfly; and the ensuing drama was recorded in detail, together with the prayerful resolves of the Christian bride to keep her temper, to receive the pin-pricks of jealousy and small spite with dignity and sweetness, and to cultivate "the spirit of love" in the household.

There were also bitter, troubled, and indirect references to the intimate relations of wifehood and the whole experience of sex. Once she marvelled that an experience so tiresome and humiliating could have been so great a temptation to the world. She half believed that the usual conception of sex as an element of pleasure in life is only a gigantic hoax, which has endured so long that no one has the courage to be the first to reveal the lie. She speculated upon the love described in European stories, and wondered if her misery in the wifely relation was due to her own bad heart and "satanic pride." Restrained and covert as these remarks were, even in the safety of the English language, they seemed not the outcry of a frigid woman, but only of a fastidious, mismated one, the more miserable for her latent capacity for love. Once she recorded rather cynically her husband's interest in a concubine, remarking that though this was living in sin, yet sin was a state from which a Chinese in his unregenerate state could hardly hope to escape anyway, and from a worldly point of view she could not help being glad that he had some comfort to compensate him for a dull wife. Much of her diary was made up of vows to submit herself with grace and humility to her husband's attentions, together with punctilious accounts of his virtues, and corollary pledges of respect to her mother-in-law, for whom she had a genuine affection. She pined a good deal for her

own home, especially for her little sister, and upbraided this wandering of her bad heart, reminding herself that where her husband and his mother were, there should her love and duty be also.

But there were lovely descriptions, too, of moments of prayer and meditation beside the water-garden in the centre of the house, which caught the passing clouds by day, and sometimes the face of the moon at night, and was her window into the heart of nature. Lovingly she recorded the lives of the little creatures who lived in the water, the opening of flower buds day by day, and even the ways of the worms and insects that infested the water-plants, all in the quaintest mixture of formal biological terms acquired at school and allegorical fantasy spun out of her own undernourished imagination and ethical aspiration. She would fashion her life like the lotus flower, she wrote, which grows sweet and stainless out of the darkest mud, not cold and colourless in its purity, but flushed with warm colour. So her life must be radiant with love, though alone and apart in this house. But in a fit of Puritanism, she discarded this allegory, as of Buddhist origin, and recorded that her heart was only a noxious sink-hole, out of which it were vain to expect any pure blossom. Confined to her studies of the garden pool, and to infrequent recreations among the twisted trees and the grotesque meteoric rocks of a little park, she longed for the great open spaces which she knew of only through English books, for the desert and the plains, for the mountains and the sea. There she thought her spirit might grow quiet at last.

Remembering the ideals of the Christian teachers, she longed, too, for some opportunity to be of real service in life, to work and to help in the great world. In her

occasional journeys through the city in a closed sedan-chair, she peeped out upon the terrible crowds of the leprous, the starving, the blind. They became an obsession with her, till she had no mind for anything else, and she prayed for them and all their ills in pathological detail. Daily she pleaded with her family to be allowed to assist once a week at a mission where one of her favourite teachers was interested in something like settlement work. The diary ended with a jubilant note, saying that she had at last been permitted to do this wonderful work, under due escort from home.

"And then?" I asked.

"She caught smallpox from one of the poor people who came to the mission, and died within a month," answered the teacher.

So ended this touching, abortive life.

"Her own family mourned her as they almost never mourn daughters in this land," added Miss Grace. "Her brother had died just before, and there is no one left but the little sister. And you never saw a child so loved. She came here for awhile, but they took her away because they could not bear her out of their sight, and they are treating her just as if she were an adored and only son, instead of a girl, trying almost to make a son of her by force of love. She is to inherit all their wealth; and they are looking for a husband for her who will come and live with them and be adopted by them, so that she will never go away from home."

She then asked me if I would like to see the little mission Sunday School which some of the Christian girls maintained for the street urchins. "It is wonderful to see girls who are so rich and comfortable in life themselves learn to care for the less fortunate," she added with a pretty air of piety.

I thought to myself that it was a good narcotic, at least, to dope into harmlessness these fresh young consciences that might otherwise make trouble in the world. And I went somewhat cynically to the mission Sunday School that afternoon. It was a simple little chapel, financed and managed by the rich girls of the school with the assistance of some young preachers in the theological seminary. Between the girls and their masculine assistants everything proceeded with charming formality. There was none of the chaffing, the flirtations in the choir loft and the church kitchen, which in our own land relieve the solemnity of Christian Endeavours and Epworth Leagues. The girls moved in little flocks, chaperoning each other and seldom venturing to stray into the presence of the demure young preachers alone.

Wandering in by twos and threes, with bashful, side-wise glances, the slum children perched on the edge of the benches as if poised for flight. At the door stood a ragged crew, wishing, yet fearing to come in. They were wise and frowsy little things, and they looked upon their teachers with the unconscious cynicism with which little children the world over look upon sweet young ladies who teach them golden texts.

The services were long, and one young preacher was determined to add his own sermon to the private efforts of the maidens. The children stirred and yawned, and surreptitiously kicked each other's shins, while their teachers turned grave, surprised olive eyes upon them. These girls themselves seemed the children—all fresh and innocent with the innocence of a sheltered class—and the children seemed their elders, sophisticated, cunning, incredulous. Some of the youngsters concentrated on a variety of moves and countermoves against each



Tea-gardens, Soo-Chow



The last great drama of the Empire is not yet played out

other's peace and comfort, under the seats, while others obviously meditated exit. Coming to the mission Sunday School was indeed the excitement of their young lives. But no sooner were they there than they longed to be out. The warm air, the scent of the peonies on the altar, the flow of words unheeded weighed upon them.

Suddenly there was the sound of music. Every eye lighted. It was a funeral, a big one! A Chinese funeral is a fine substitute for a circus parade. It calls to the young like a fire. The preacher raised his voice in earnest protest, and then, forgetting himself for a moment on the wings of his own words, stopped suddenly and looked around aghast. Every seat was empty. Yet I thought that there was just a shade of relief in his manner. Perhaps he, too, was glad to be released from the sermon. Perhaps he was not wholly above funerals.

The young teachers hesitated. They were not quite so interested in this form of entertainment. The music continued—the tramp, tramp, tramp of many feet, the wail of Chinese instruments and the rhythm of an Occidental band contending, in discords, with a drum and an automobile horn. It was a very big funeral, they whispered, and clustered at the door, deprecating, watching from afar, gay little figures in their pink satin trousers, demure and soft-voiced.

It was such a funeral as Shanghai did not often see. All that wealth and foreign civilization could add to Chinese ceremonial was there, the utmost flash of colours, the utmost blare of music, the parade of every vehicle known to man. First came an escort of men in uniform on horseback. Then followed coolies in white, bearing biers piled with flowers, and thereafter a series of structures like small Chinese pagodas decorated with

red streamers, borne on the shoulders of men dressed in red and white.

By that time all the crowd was murmuring. It was for the death of a child, some-one said. An only child, and an heir. So many were the lives of men, so many the trappings and ornaments and treasures that the parents could conjure to their service; yet they could not keep one little life in their midst!

Still the procession continued, though it seemed that all the streets of Shanghai must now be full of those who had passed on with prancing horses and mountains of flowers. There still were priests to come—Taoist priests in robes of Yale blue silk, with hats like academic mortar boards on their heads, Buddhist priests in yellow veiled with black, shaven-pated. After them came the bearers of the household gods, silly, abject, waxen creatures inanely nodding amidst plants and verdure. Lastly came men in red who bore a great banner, gaudy, hieroglyphic. And the girls exclaimed wonderingly:

“It says, on that banner, ‘I. H. S., the Church of Jesus Christ.’ ”

The little soul was to undergo no risks on its un-earthly journey. Taoist demons, and Buddhist saints, and the gods of the household, and Jesus himself, were all conscripted to serve it and make safe its path.

Then came a slow procession of automobiles, some piled with flowers and treasures, all decked with red and white as for a festival, containing mourners in white. Behind them came more men on horseback, leading a gorgeous procession of banners. Every firm or institution that the family were connected with had its own gonfalon. Banks, ware-houses, steamships, railroads, government posts marched by in symbol, honouring the little life.

Suddenly one of the girls gave a cry: "That is the banner of our school."

And others whispered, "It is she—she died," awe-struck and stunned. Then I understood. It was the little sister of the Christian bride whose diary I had read, the only little sister, for whom she had pined in the loneliness of wedlock, and who, after her death, had been crowned with the honour and glory of sonship.

So the procession passed till all Shanghai blazed with it, and the scent of funeral flowers was heavy and sweet on the city air—a passionate parade of family wealth, a flinging of splendour, defiant, into the face of death—and then at last—the little white hearse.

Behind it only one coach came straggling. In it a woman in white silk knelt with face pressed against the seat, her shoulders heaving with sobs.

CHAPTER XIII

HIS AMERICAN MARRIAGE

EARLY next morning I turned my face to the North. But, though Peking was my goal, I lingered for a day in the beautiful old city of Soochow. Soochow differs from Shanghai as Boston differs from Chicago. It is quiet and simple, and its society and its culture are very old and hidden from the eyes of the passing stranger. Yet he who runs most swiftly may still read its sober, crumbling beauty, and its essential wealth—read them in the rice-fields and the rich mulberry plantations that lie all about; in the *thwack, thwack, thwack* of the silk looms illumining every dingy cottage with fabric delicate as the markings of frost; in the laden junks that go up and down beneath the circular arched bridges of the Grand Canal; and in the sober and cultivated life of old families who are, in many cases, the descendants of mandarins who won literary honours here when this was the intellectual capital of the empire.

Here are no paved streets for the Rolls Royce, nor passage even for rickshaws. But on the backs of donkeys all hung with bells like a winter sleigh, and pursued by a yelling boy with a big stick, one may career in state among the bazaars. But mostly the highways are the canals. Like their Venetian counterparts these canals are most pestilential institutions, but picturesque to a degree. All afternoon I slipped from one to another, watching the life of the city pass before me like a moving picture. From garden to pagoda I went, in my little

houseboat, and out into the silk country where threads of silk were hung like spun glass from one twisted tree to another. I presented myself with an introduction to a rich man's house, and saw an environment like that in which the Christian bride had worn out her life. The house consisted of endless series of rooms, not wide or large as we count space, but intricately and beautifully carved and lacquered, and furnished with black ebony tables and quadrangular stools, placed stiffly about the walls. The more intimate rooms I did not see. The pussy-footed servant led me only among those empty and public, unrolling here a beautiful painting, and there a piece of embroidery, almost jewel-like in the clarity and brilliance of its colours. The rooms were built around courts, and in the midst of the house was the water-garden. Though they breed germs and are little infernos of mosquitoes, I never failed to feel in these water-gardens, on which the inner verandas of a Chinese house open, a singular beauty and romance. As I walked among these stiff, beautiful apartments, and out upon the balcony over the pool, I pictured the daily routine of the Christian bride and all the living details of her domestic imprisonment. Vastly uncomfortable as the house seemed, it was yet a symbol of domestic culture and dignity.

I wandered, too, in such a garden as she had described, among quiet pools, and rockeries, and twisted trees, and tea-houses, and arching bridges. This, then, had been her world, a little world, cramped and irritating to one who has breathed of the winds of the West that now blow over this old land, but beautiful and fine in its still, inward way. Yet, when I heard the Americans of Soochow discussing an American bride who had come with her well-born Chinese husband to such a house,

charmed by tales of Oriental princeliness of life, my heart was still with very horror.

Of her I learned nothing, except that the Americans in Soochow were distressed about her, believing her unhappy, and indeed well-nigh desperate, yet having no means of communication with her. But one man told me in some detail of another American girl in another city, married to a rich and cultivated Chinese whom she had met in the United States. She had been a belle in a university town, the daughter of liberal-minded people of some substance, who were patrons of the Cosmopolitan Club. After the Revolution in China had aroused such wide-spread interest in the aspirations of the young republic, her father had fallen in the way of inviting young Chinese students to Sunday dinner.

"We think ourselves civilized," he would say. "Do you know that these young men's ancestors were civilized three thousand years before we ever began to think about it?"

He became a diligent student of Chinese art and Confucian ethics. It was the first intellectual hobby he had had since he graduated from the university some twenty years before. He would enlarge upon the fine manners of these young men, their punctiliousness in acknowledging hospitality with gifts.

"They come among us as nobodies," he would say, "but you don't know what great connections they have at home. More birth and breeding than the king of England, sir!"

And all the while his young daughter sat like Desdemona, drinking in the discussions of art and politics, the quaint descriptions of life in their Chinese homes—till one day she announced to her father that she was going to marry the young man who was his favourite guest.

It was something of a blow to him. He had not reckoned upon that method of showing his appreciation of this ancient people, and pictured his prospective grandchildren in some dismay. But the young man was rich and suave, and in love; and the vanity of princely connections, though Oriental, somewhat softened his instinctive objections. So he consented at last, and made a virtue of his freedom from race-prejudice, boasting mildly at the Town and Gown Club of his son-in-law's relatives and achievements.

The son-in-law was indeed an exemplary young man, a gentleman and a scholar, as all the faculty said. To do him justice he warned his new wife of the pitfalls she would meet in his land, and it was her eagerness rather than his that carried the marriage through. But all her empty little soul was thrilled with the romance of this Oriental bridal. Visions of eastern splendour, as gorgeously mixed as *Chu Chin Chow*, floated through her mind, and were confirmed by the silks and embroideries that began to arrive from China for her trousseau. She told him that his people should be her people, and vowed her willingness to sacrifice every custom of her own. Poor young man, what could he do? After all, he could not picture all the details of an American woman's life, nor gauge the Occidental girl's capacity for such subjection. Her humility was so beautiful in his eyes, so Confucian in its self-annihilation, so unlike all he had heard of American women, that he trusted to it to conciliate his parents and gild his unpopular marriage. His father, at least, was a man of the world, and had so far adopted Western ways as to refrain from arranging a betrothal for his son.

So the girl came to an old and aristocratic city of China, and entered as a daughter-in-law into an old and

aristocratic family. They did not approve of the match, were indeed deeply disappointed, but they treated her not unkindly. Her husband had not misrepresented their wealth and importance according to old Chinese standards. But at first sight of her new home all dreams of Oriental splendour vanished. The rooms were small, cramped, and bare, and, though there was a beauty and preciousness of detail such as no plutocrat of America can achieve, her taste was not trained to recognize or appreciate it, nor to know the pricelessness of things she handled. She would have given the whole house for an American bath-room. The lack of sanitary conveniences irritated and shamed her, and from the human stench of the Chinese city, an emanation that must have been as characteristic of Athens and old London as it is of China, and has vanished only with modern plumbing, she shrank in horror.

But these were the least of her troubles. She who at home had had her own little car in which she moved about the town day or night unchaperoned; who had pursued her own courses unquestioned since she was fifteen, and had never once obeyed her mother since at twelve she flatly refused to wear her rubbers; who disregarded most conventions when she wished, with her parents' teasing connivance—who was, in short, the typical spoiled daughter of kindly, indulgent, well-to-do parents in a small American city—found herself reduced to rigorous, unquestioning obedience to an old Chinese woman, and every movement and impulse regulated by the traditions of thousands of years. Like most American girls of her type, she had looked forward to throwing off the last remnants of authority when she was married, to possessing a little house of which she was mistress, and for which she chose furnishings in accordance with tastes

secretly cherished but ungratified at home, and to controlling her husband as a willing slave and vassal to the caprices of her love. She had not quite rid herself of the idea that this old Chinese palace of which she dreamed would be hers to renovate, and to supply with bath-rooms and sleeping porches, and if her husband retained any inconvenient Oriental notions, she expected in time to wheedle them out of him.

But not only was not anything in the house hers, nor any opinion regarded—her husband was not even hers. Her demonstrations of affection were regarded as gross wantonness; she was expected to remember every minute that he belonged first to his mother, and was hers only in the physical relation of wifehood; and that next to his mother there were half a dozen members of the household who, by reason of seniority or other pre-eminence, had first claim upon his notice and consideration. In the common groups of the household they met as strangers, and even in the privacy that no one could take from her, he nightly hardened his heart against her complaints, as the old ties of family and the old code of ethics regained control of him. No one treated her with cruelty, but she felt herself a barbarian among them, wanton and shameless in her love for her husband, lawless and crude in every impulse, and from minute to minute she was being invisibly moulded and chained, as it seemed, to death itself.

Her freedom was wholly gone. She could not move out of the house alone. She did all things with the daughters-in-laws in flocks and herds. Vaguely she heard of other Americans in the city, but she had no means of getting in touch with them. She wrote home appealing for her parents' aid in leaving this "daily hell," but her husband read the letter, and insisted that she should

send one which he dictated, saying that she was well and was learning to be a good wife. Thereafter he was her only intermediary with the outer world. As her discontent became obvious, the chains were drawn tighter, lest she should run away and create a scandal, and the family lose face.

Then her baby was born, and it was a little girl baby. Three hours after its birth it was found strangled at her breast, and herself dead in a pool of blood. She had killed it herself, and then, by wrenching and straining, had brought on a hemorrhage. Her story was known through a letter she smuggled out, addressed to the American consul, through the intermediary of the Occidental physician whose attendance at childbirth had been permitted as a special concession.

The melancholy of this terrible tale lingered with me all day, and somewhat poisoned the beauty of Soochow, darkening my mind, even as I climbed the pagoda to the top, and ascended higher and higher among Buddhas that gleamed soberly from the dust, and wind-blown bells that faintly tinkled among the eaves. And the shadow of it was on the quiet waters of the canal, as the sun died in a flush of rose-colour above the green and misty country-side, and the boy came bearing jasmine-flower tea and almond cakes for my refreshment. Then I turned my face to Peking.

Two days and two nights beyond Soochow it lay—by the swiftest route that western engineers could build. For me they were days of strange loneliness. Shut in my little railway compartment, I swung through that vast green land, league after league after league of it sinking behind me, and always, it seemed, the landscape grew wider and more sombre. The bamboo and the rice-fields vanished, and the warm mist of the South changed

to crystal sunlight. On the second morning the air that blew through my window was fresh with the sweetness of a northern June. During that time I had only my thoughts for company, and the memories of home now so far away that it seemed scarcely more real than something I had read about in a book. So I sped onward in a dream, for the loneliness and the perpetual motion and the swift flight of the landscape without, and the everlasting succession of yellow beings who came and looked at me and left tea and went away, acted on my mind like a species of hypnotism.

But it was not granted me to enter the visionary old city of Peking in a visionary mood.

CHAPTER XIV

THE RESCUE OF LITTLE MUM

"God looks out for fools and children," says the old proverb. And for wanderers, too, I think. Only a three-fold blessing could explain Little Mum, and the beginning and end of the fortunes she linked with mine.

I had been dumped out in Tientsin, in the gleaming dust of sunset, to await the express to Peking. The express, it seemed, had already gone, and there was not another till morning. Here was a dilemma. I did not have enough money to risk an overnight stop in Tientsin, among strangers. Somehow I must get to Peking that night.

While I was meditating on this crisis in my affairs, and taking private stock of my cash, a plaintive voice said, in the meticulous English which marks the European who has learned it as a foreign language, "Pardon me, but how can I reach Peking?"

"That," said I, "is what I should like to know."

Then I stopped in utter amazement. What walking doll-shop was this? A slim, flaxen-haired little creature, for all the world like a doll the worse for wear, stood before me. In her arms she carried a flaxen-haired mite. Another, perhaps two years old, was clinging to her skirts. A third, a rosy little girl, was making a face at me from among a shower of golden ringlets. And a fourth, who was possibly five years old, with bushy yellow bobbed hair, and a round sailor hat, stood like Buster Brown, excogitating mischief.

"You see," she continued earnestly, "I must surely

come into Peking to-night. I must find my husband. I am bringing my children to find my husband."

Her children! I surveyed the little thing in amazement. She did not look seventeen.

"But surely, if your husband knows that you are coming—" I began.

She interrupted and began to explain eagerly. He did not know. He had left her behind in Shanghai, saying that he would send for her. She had heard no more of him. All she knew was that he worked in a Danish firm in Peking, but she had forgotten the name and address. Left alone in Shanghai, she had found her money running low, and was afraid to stay on in that great city. So without a nurse, without any assistance whatsoever, she had set out with her children to find him. With four children under five, one of them a nursing baby, she had come two days and two nights on a Chinese railway, among men who could not speak her language, under circumstances utterly strange to her. But somehow she had done it. She had nursed them and fed them and scrubbed them continuously, as one must on these grimy roads, and had brought them safe thus far. It was plain that she could not carry on much farther.

She must get to Peking that very night, she assured me earnestly as a postscript to the tale, because she had no money, and darkness was coming on, and she did not know where to go in Tientsin.

She broke off to cry fretfully, "Bobby, Bobby, please, Bobby, come back."

Bobby was serenely marching off, with his hand trustingly in that of a kindly Chinese. I ran after Bobby and detached him, to the accompaniment of inarticulate, smiling apologies from the Chinese.

"I will take Bobby around the station with me," I said, holding fast to his resisting hand, "and see what I can find out—that is if any one speaks English in this bally place."

"Oh, thank you," she started to say, and broke off to cry, in horrified tones, "Karin, get up."

Karin, the two-year-old, having got rather weary, was lying on her back in the dust, licking the dust on one little hand and wiping it off with her pink skirt. One could see germs of cholera, leprosy, smallpox, and all the bacteria that infest a Chinese city, walking visibly into her little rosy mouth. I picked up Karin and attached her to my other hand.

With these two I set forth to discover what I could. Plainly now I must get to Peking that night. There, at least, I had introductions and could obtain money, and so represent some kind of security to this odd and friendless little crew. I had some difficulty dragging Bobby and Karin along. They kicked and fought and even bit my hand like little untrained animals and cried "Mum, Mum. I want Little Mum," all the way. But between attempts to tame them into friendliness, I discovered that there was a train with a gasoline engine that was starting for Peking shortly and would arrive there at two in the morning. Apparently all other foreigners had been fortunate enough to catch the express. We were alone in our predicament.

I arranged for a compartment; then I looked around for something to eat. There seemed nothing at all to purchase. I returned to Little Mum. I found her in a state verging on tears. Nora had disappeared.

I put Bobby's hand in that of his mother, and told her on no account to let him go, and lifting Karin, protesting, in my arms, I started off to find Nora. Having had

some experience with my own blonde head, I guessed that even in a sophisticated city like this I should find her the cynosure of wondering eyes. And I did. I soon spied afar off a crowd of Chinese gathered as if about a street show, and in the middle stood Nora, stamping, screaming, furiously shaking her curls, making the most astounding display of naughty faces that I ever saw, and heaping a marvellous flood of invective, half-English, half-Danish, on these strange beings who understood not a word, but who were to her, no doubt, like ogres.

The Chinese were doing nothing. They were merely staring at her with kind, wondering faces. I rescued Nora and took her back to her mother; then I stowed them all and their twelve pieces of baggage into the first-class compartment I had acquired, and squeezed myself in after them. Slowly the train pulled out of Tientsin.

I looked out over the city. The sun was setting. A strange grey desolate city it seemed, without form or comeliness, surrounded by grey wastes over which the dust now sparkled and twinkled, shot with long shafts of sunlight that were full of fine little red sparkles like fire. Beyond lay Peking, and I thought of all the caravans that had gone thither, and the great armies—the fierce-riding Mongols of Kubla Khan, the proud ranks of the Manchus, and that other procession when the Union Jack and Old Glory and the tricolour of France and many another marched side by side to save the white men in Peking from the Boxers. Then I looked around on this little crew of which I had constituted myself the escort. Surely no stranger caravan had ever knocked at the gates of Kubla Khan.

It was growing dark now, and the children were hungry. We fished out the remnants of some very dry sandwiches, and some sweet chocolate. They ate it

all ravenously. Obviously this was not enough, for suddenly Little Mum exclaimed: "Where is Bobby?" Once more I started in pursuit. I found Bobby in the Chinese carriage, hospitably sharing rice and duck's eggs with half a dozen delighted Orientals. I rescued him and bore him back, protesting loudly, just in time to discover Nora on the platform swinging against the gate that separated her from the dark and flying earth below. I carried them both back and deposited them behind a barricade of baggage.

Little Mum, utterly worn out, had fallen asleep in my absence with her baby asleep at her breast, and little Karin cuddling at her side somewhere between dreams and waking. Bobby and Nora were sleepy now, and very cross.

In a low voice I offered to tell them stories. Apparently no one had ever told them stories before, and they could see no charm in the performance. I tried to pet them, but they were restless and suspicious, like little wild creatures, willing to be friends only when the initiative was left to them. Nevertheless the night and the shadows thrown by the dim light of the smoky kerosene lamp, our only illumination, frightened them a little, and in their own savage fashion they clung to me.

But even bad little children must sleep sometimes. Slowly their lids began to droop, though they were perversely determined to stay awake as long as possible. Finally Bobby, snuggling close—not in friendliness, but in a kind of fear—dropped his little head against my lap. I removed his shoes and loosened his garments a little. Thereupon Nora, jealous of these attentions, dumped herself down with some emphasis on the other side of me and went to sleep at once.

So they all slept, and only I was awake through hours on end, as the train crept slowly on through the darkness to Peking. All through the train the Chinese were sleeping now. Gradually the light burned dimmer and dimmer. An old Chinese would enter now and again and deposit a pot of tea.

Some time after two we pulled into Peking. I half expected that the friends to whom I had been consigned there would meet me. But I had no time to look out for myself. Carrying Karin on one arm, securely seizing Nora by the other hand, and admonishing Bobby to cling to Nora, I got off the train. I discovered afterward that a man had been sent to meet me, but he had gone away, reporting that no one had come except a woman with a tiny babe and the mother of three children. So I forfeited my escort. But this was of no interest to me at the time. The question now was what to do.

Knowing the ways of Oriental cities by this time, I thought there must surely be a good foreign hotel in Peking. I asked the name of it from the most responsible-looking official about the station, and was directed to the Wagon-lits. I even found a man of the hotel who spoke a little English and was there to get belated baggage that missed the express. A taxi was not procurable, he said. Would we take rickshaws? Obviously we should have to.

We loaded Little Mum's twelve pieces of baggage and my eight, including my camera and typewriter, on a succession of rickshaws. Now, a rickshaw is made only for one person, but obviously we could not trust the children to strange coolies. So in one I put Little Mum, with Bobby, who was, I thought, the most responsible of the children, despite his predilection for Chinese so-

ciety. Then I got into another rickshaw, took Karin and Nora on my lap, and directed the coolie to bear us away.

The night was still and starlit, and sweet at this hour with dew and summer scents. A row of the electric lights blinked sleepily before me, and turned the leaves of trees here and there to silver and transparency. Beyond rose the outlines of a wall, massive and sombre, a fortress of shadows challenging the very stars—the wall of Kubla Khan. The children slept in my arms and against my side, and I prayed that that ragged celestial on whom our life now seemed to depend was a trusty soul and would bear us safe. So it was that I entered into the city of the old emperors.

Soon we drew up before the hotel. Leading in my five babes in the woods, I registered for us all.

Then it was that my troubles really began. As I stood there, myself heavy with sleep, weighted down with Karin in my arms, clutching the dream of a soft white bed and the clarity of morning beyond it for the solution of all problems, Little Mum announced that she must find her husband at once.

"He must be in Peking," she said. "Surely, if he is in Peking, we can find him. Some one must find him."

In vain I remonstrated. I spoke lyrically of the comforts of bed, hopefully of the light of the morning, tenderly of the children who must have sleep. I did not think of what was probably her reason for concern, the fear of running up a hotel bill which she could not pay. I was quite ready to share my own scanty funds for the sake of peace in the family and dreams till dawn.

She persisted. She went from one bland Chinese clerk to another, pleading: Where was her husband? Could not they find her husband? She awoke half a dozen

sleeping Chinese boys and repeated the plea. She was obdurate with the obduracy of a child. Plainly there was to be no sleep in that hotel till her husband was found.

The children, subdued by night and fear, now clung to me helplessly, pathetically. Resolutely I announced that, whatever she did, I intended to take the children upstairs and put them to sleep. Suddenly she noticed a light in one of the side rooms.

"Why," she said naïvely, "there are people there! There are white men. Perhaps they know my husband."

A party in evening dress was gathered around some card tables. There were piles of money on the tables and glasses of whiskey and soda before each player.

"Speak to them," pleaded Little Mum, laying her hand on my arm coaxingly. "Please, I beg you to speak to them and ask them where is my husband."

It seemed unlikely that a group like that would know of a Dane, apparently in moderate circumstances and but newly come to town. Besides, I was a little in doubt concerning the character of the women, or the state of any one's wits after all night consumption of whiskey and soda. I did not want her to be teased or shocked, or even snubbed by that gay party.

I tried to communicate my suspicions to her, but she did not understand. There were white men there, and white men were her natural protectors. My services, in her eyes, were now superfluous. Like all women of her type, she had an almost unbounded trust in a man, any man, and a subtle distrust of a woman as guide and guardian.

Fluttering around like a pretty bird, she detached the children from me and, with tender cooings, shepherded them before her into the doorway of that room,

and stood there with her little blonde children at her feet, and her wee baby in her arms.

"Pardon me," she said in her plaintive voice, "but surely you must know my husband."

A strange vision she was, this little doll thing and her doll children, bursting upon the hectic and swimming consciousness of such a midnight group. A man stared vaguely at her through a monocle. A woman tittered in embarrassment and constraint. But one man rose and came toward her, asking with the utmost courtesy, "What is your husband's name?"

She gave it, adding that he worked for a Danish firm.

"It must be the ——— firm," he said.

"It is like that," she assented eagerly, and, turning to the rest of the group, he said, with an air that silenced at once the laughter tittering on the lips of the woman, "Does any one know ——— of the ——— firm?"

The man with the monocle arose, apparently not half so rude as he looked, and came forward, suggesting that they telephone to some one else in the firm.

"Yes, I know two or three people there," said Little Mum's self-constituted champion. "If you will just make the lady comfortable"—and precipitating her upon the man with a monocle, who was now all courtesy, he was off to the telephone. The children meanwhile fled back to me.

In a few minutes, Little Mum floated over to me, gay as a butterfly.

"They have found him," she cried. "He is coming for me at once."

My responsibilities were now at an end. I delivered my little sleepy charges. But they who had been such wild little things, suspicious and adverse to petting, now

clung to me, unwilling to be taken away, and I was a little sorry to release them.

I never saw Little Mum after that night. My last glimpse of her was a touching tableau. Coming back downstairs, to separate my baggage from hers, I found her enthroned in an easy chair, blushing and sparkling as she had never sparkled in my presence, while my masculine successor to this domestic regency marched up and down with Bobby on his shoulder; and the game of cards went on in the other room without him. And without the monocle of his superior friend, too, for that was now adorning Bobby's right eye.

So Little Mum vanished from the scene, and into the arms of her husband, I hope, but the Don Quixote who at last restored her missing lord became the hero of another story which I will tell anon.

CHAPTER XV

THE COURTS OF KUBLA KHAN

NOTHING that I had seen in any other city of China explained Peking. There were wide streets, enormously wide, where the feet of the coolies pluffed softly in deep dust. They were crowded with strange throngs that had no parallel in the cities of China—Mongols and Thibetans in woolen draperies, and Lama novices in robes the colour of grape-juice. Women in flowing dresses walked by twos and threes with unbound feet on shoes set three or four inches above the earth. They had great head-dresses like wings. Their long faces were gaily rouged and their eyebrows stained in pencilled lines of black. These were Manchu ladies, of the race which has ruled China for three centuries. Very white they were, these Manchu women, and strangely alluring, with the sleek air of harem creatures, and a kind of desert shyness. Among the human throngs moved vehicles and animals which I had not seen in any Chinese city—hooded carts with clumsy wheels, funny little horses, and ever and anon a camel-caravan.

For Peking is not properly a Chinese city. It is the quintessence of the pomp and power latent in savage places and desert peoples—Tartar and Mongol and Manchu—called into being by fertile contact with the civilization of China. Always a foreign capital, Peking had taken unto itself the civilization of China and placed it sometimes in alien frames, building up a city that was not wholly of China, nor yet of Thibet or Mongolia or

Tartary, but the consummation of the genius of all the Mongolian peoples.

Then gradually, as I rode in the dry sunshine of early summer, its form became clear to me. It is not one city, but rather a series of concentric cities, wall within wall, holding at its heart the forbidden palaces. Around the Forbidden City is the Imperial City, and between that and the great Tartar wall is the Tartar City, a portion of which is now laid out like a European capital with fine avenues of shade trees and lawns. Here the legations are housed, and guarded by their own soldiers. Outside this is the wall of Kubla Khan, pierced by magnificent gates that are, as it were, tunnels through it, and wide enough on top to form the favourite promenade of Peking society. Outside of this lies the Chinese city, and beyond, wastes of dust and casual green, stretching away to meet the fairy blue of the Western Hills. As I went about that first day, something of the age and strangeness of it all came over me, an age and a strangeness that were not of the past, but still vital and living among the forces of to-day. One seemed to have come to the outposts of the world in this capital of crumbling China, on the edge of the vast chaos of Siberian Russia. Everywhere there were hints of immeasurable age, not indeed in Peking itself, for that is scarcely older than most European capitals, but in the civilizations it enshrined. And yet it belonged not wholly to the times of long ago. In the palaces of the Great Mogul in Northern India, which are the only things in Asia, perhaps in the world, which compare in imperial magnificence with the palaces of Peking, I had always the sense of a civilization dead and gone. Though their palaces wore a freshness as of yesterday, though it is only within the memory of man that the last vestiges

of their power were swept away, one has no fear that those ghosts will arise and walk again.

But in Peking, in the midst of an imperialism more ancient, among splendours that have come nigher to the dust, one has still the sense of perennial life. The last great drama of the empire is not yet played out. It began yesterday, and another scene may be enacted to-morrow. And among the ghosts of the past, figures already embalmed in books with the history of a dead rule still walk about, fresh, young, living. The Empress Dowager is dead. Her marble bridges are stained with rain and dust, and on her lakes where once plied the pleasure boats of her maidens the green scum now gathers about the neglected lotus-flowers. But her first lady-in-waiting took tea with me, like any American girl, a pretty young woman, vivacious and smart, and very much a creature of these times!

The terrors of the Boxer Uprising are among the tales our fathers tell. In the lawns of the British legation the scars of shot are now healed with grass and lost among the petals of flowers, and in the sunshine that falls so quietly among the princely red courts there is no memory of smoke and fire. But Dr. Gamewell, the hero of that famous siege—without whom these white men and women locked up between the Boxers and the Empress Dowager could never have survived—was a kindly simple man in middle life, with whom I used to talk about Chinese education and to whom I even carried, on occasion, the tale of my troubles. Out of the history that was already a legend, the heroes and heroines of a vanished régime emerged as living creatures, gossiping of matters that seem now to belong only to ghosts.

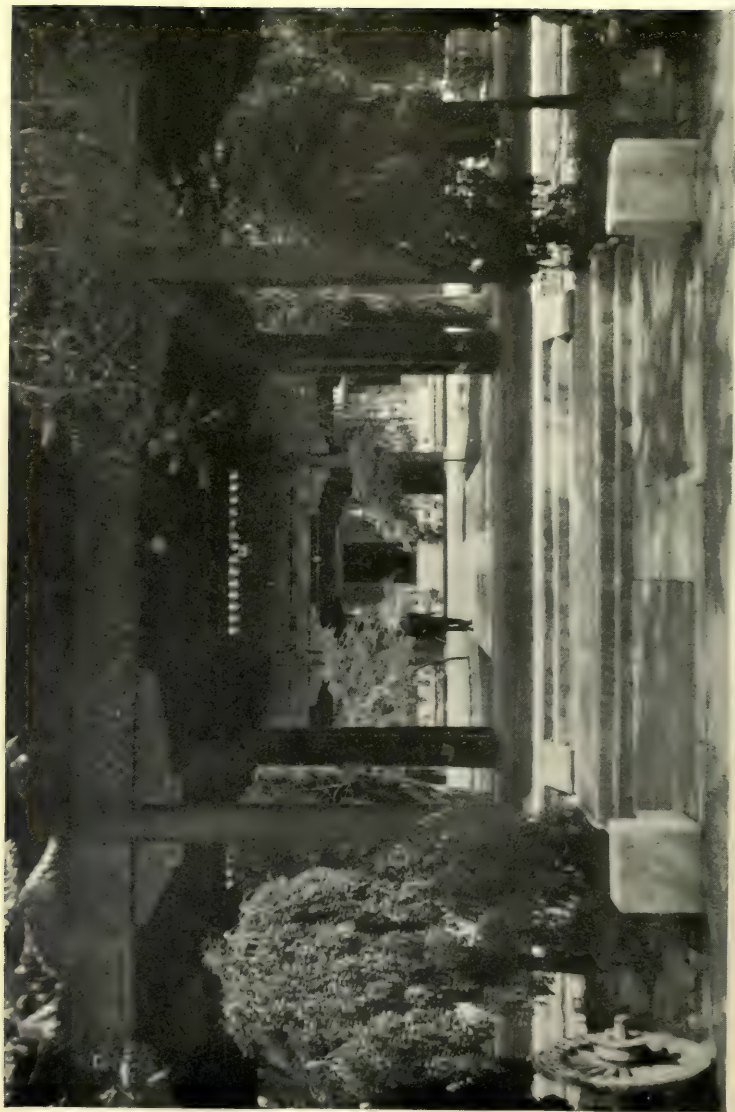
But for a time I had no thought for the past. I was



It seemed scarcely credible that, out of that legendary past, a living princess could step into one's presence



A pretty young woman, vivacious and chic, and very much a creature of these times



In the sunshine that falls so quietly among the old ducal courts of the British legation,
there is no memory of smoke and fire

engrossed in the international whirl of the present. The diplomatic life I found petty enough, and missionaries are seldom at their best in these larger centres. To families marooned there year after year the splendours which are so alluring to the visitor have long since become an old story, and are, moreover, subtly discredited by pride of race. Hemmed in by wastes of sea and wastes of land, isolated by the speech and customs of an alien folk, the white men are thrown on each others' mercies. Banding together to protect themselves from without, they must also protect themselves in the closeness of this contact with each other. So there arise cliques and defensive alliances, jealousies, bickerings, and mutual criticism. So, too, there arise little reputations which would, in the broad blaze of the world, be like gas-flames in sunshine, but which make these small settlements feel like a land which has no need of the sun or the moon to enlighten it. Moreover, in a petty diplomatic centre there are also mutual jealousies of race, and the straining after form and precedence which grace the larger courts and capitals.

Yet dull as the foreign community seemed, both the diplomatic and the missionary families counted among their numbers some exotic guests. One man blew in from Harbin, and was off again in a day, but he set going some of the first news about the Bolsheviki, then just beginning their incredible experiment. In his train appeared two others from Tsingtau, averring that the Japanese had no intention of giving back Shantung should the war ever end, a statement which precipitated argument. Then came a crank from Moscow, who swore that the World War would still be won on the eastern front. Followed some refugees from the Caucasus, including an American woman with a nursing

baby. They had been with the American relief, and had fled before the Turks three weeks after the baby was born. How they covered the infinities of lawless land between the Caucasus and Peking, unarmed and without supplies, I do not know. But here they were, none the worse—a rosy mother of a rosy baby. There were also Russian gentlemen and ladies of some degree exiled by the Bolsheviki, who pre-empted all the card tables and the more exotic brands of alcohol in the community forthwith, and were not at home to any one who could not speak French.

Indeed every bark afloat on the troubled seas of nationality between the Pacific Ocean and the eastern bounds of the German empire ultimately came into port in Peking. Daily we looked for the arrival of the frailest skiff of all, and half expected that the family of the Russian Czar would enter some morning into our midst.

For in Peking, in the later days of the war, one could feel the very pulse of history. At that time it seemed that this great city, so often the pawn of conflicting peoples and imperial hopes, was now to be the centre of a greater storm, for all around there were threatenings and mutterings as out of chaos, talk of the Japanese menace on the frontiers of China, and threatenings out of Siberian Russia. For the war was not yet over, and every one was still privileged to shape in imagination its final act. Most of our talk is now out of date. Yet the chaos of Asia remains, the murmurings and the mutterings, and the stirring of new national lives that have not yet come to birth.

From the tumults of the present, I would turn to the old historic tumults of the city—to the Boxer Uprising, and to the succession of usurping emperors, who from dynasty to dynasty down to the Empress Dowager her-

self, had conquered a throne but not a people. The most typical of them all was the Empress, a vital and dominating figure in the only profession, except acting, in which women, in all ages, have been able to challenge the superiority of men. The sins of an imperial tradition that is as bloody as any in history were concentrated in her. In a land where women are despised and subdued, she had raised herself by wit and charm and energy of will to a place above all masculine claimants to the throne. That her methods were not those that are taught in Sunday School is beside the point. She was true to her tradition, and triumphs in history by being so brilliantly and vitally a type. Though she died in 1909, she is already a mythical character in the Chinese Republic, a creature to rank with Cleopatra, among those whom time and legend have deified to more than earthly power. With her died the old Empire of China, and the oldest throne in the world. She herself, by every act, had sapped the foundations of it, though it had withstood thousands of years. Yet it is doubtful if another could have carried on so long. She lived too late, and lost the fame of imperial beneficence by the caprice of time. Yet it is characteristic of her that it was not in her life-time that men saw the final crumbling of the dragon throne.

Chosen as royal concubine, she had made the most of a woman's only path to imperial power. For she had so bewitched the Emperor that the imperial attentions passed by the true Consort and came chiefly to her. Perhaps as a natural consequence, she had borne a son, while the Imperial Consort was still childless. It took only a little more witchery to have the boy declared the heir to the throne. By the time the Emperor died, she had been raised from the position of Favourite Concu-

bine to full partnership with her rival in the position of wife. The next step was to be declared Regent of the Empire jointly with the true Dowager Empress, while the child that was hers by nature and the other woman's by grace of position only was still in minority. Thereafter the other Dowager ceased to count at all, and ultimately removed herself from the path of ambition by death—a habit that baby-emperors under her regency also developed, as soon as they drew too near to maturity. There were not wanting those who commented on this strange coincidence. But the Empress had so ably buttressed herself with all the self-interest of the corrupt bureaucracy of China, and was, in some respects, so skilful an executive that the whisper did not rise to full accusation.

One Emperor, Kwangsu, did attain his majority and his throne, and the Empress, now no longer young, retired in his favour, with the fine gesture of self-sacrifice, and went to live in the Summer Palace where she could watch the developments as a mere private gentlewoman who seeks no honour save that of motherhood. The Emperor was a good young man who, even in the seclusion in which the Empress had kept him, had not failed to feel the new currents of thought that had swept Japan into the arena of world progress. When he came to the throne, he promptly formulated a series of edicts, designed to modernize China over night. Had he succeeded, the world would have seen something beside which the rise of Japan would have served only for tea-cup gossip among nations, something which would have altered the course of history, and changed even the character and proportions of the World War. Had there been a Shogun as able as the Empress, the history of Japan might have been otherwise. However this

may be, the good offices of Kwangsu were doomed. It was not in the power of an average young man, inexperienced in a world which the Empress had moulded and held bound to her by every tie of life, to accomplish anything against her will. On a great tide of reaction she was swept back to power, "to save the Empire," and reigned undisputed till her death, with the young Emperor safely gaoled in her palace.

One result was the Boxer Uprising, the Empress' flight, and the looting even of the inviolable treasures of the Forbidden City by the avenging nations of the West. Another was the further humiliation of China in the scramble of foreign powers for concessions, and a series of diplomatic dealings on her part at once dastardly and inept. The average monarch could not have survived a tithe of these mistakes. Yet she lived and reigned against the wrath of the whole civilized world, fresh and charming in her old age as Bernhardt herself, and died at last, neither by the hand of the assassin nor the executioner, but securely and at peace, saving face even in the presence of death. Two years afterwards China was a Republic.

It seemed a marvellous life to me, and I longed to know it more intimately. But who could reveal the true inwardness of those days in the Forbidden City, scarcely a decade before, which were already legendary, shrouded in myth and alien custom?

But one day, in a bookstore, I came upon a volume entitled *Two Years in the Forbidden City* by Princess Der Ling, First Lady in Waiting to the Empress Dowager. She wrote delightful English, this Manchu princess, fresh as the chatter of any merry girl, and her words were a magical key to that old royal life. Triumphant I bore the book homeward. Then a pretty

little missionary wife who had been very kind to me, said, "Would you like to meet Princess Der Ling? She married an American, and we all know her well."

It seemed scarcely credible that, out of that dusty past, a living figure could step into one's own presence. Yet so it was. Princess Der Ling was an attractive young woman, chic and sprightly and smartly gowned, with heavy black hair and clear white skin, and slightly flattened features that told rather of Tartary than China. She spoke English fluently, with only a slight accent that might have been French, and a delightful interlarding of American slang. A woman of energy, intelligence, and a cosmopolitan experience which is granted to few, she had carved out her life between three civilizations, and was still fighting for her right to be not wholly Manchu, nor yet American or French, but just herself.

She was born the daughter of Lord Yuen, the Minister to France under the Empress Dowager. It was the custom to register the daughters of officials at the palace, that the Emperor might choose them for secondary wives if he wished. It was thus that the Empress Dowager had entered upon her path to power. But Lord Yuen, having other plans for his daughters, spirited them away to Europe, and brought them up as French girls. After they had reached young ladyhood and were enjoying the full whirl of belledom in Paris, the old Empress heard of them, and summoned them to her court. How they came, and were chosen her ladies in waiting, and all the trials and tribulations of their adjustment to a life quite alien to their customs if not to their birth, Princess Der Ling herself has told.

In the palace Der Ling's shrewdness, integrity, and girlish good humour, and especially her value as a means

of information of the outside world which the Empress could tap without losing face, soon made her a favourite, and she was made first lady in waiting and given the title of Princess in her own right. She had the incomparable advantage of seeing the life of the imperial court in its last days, of knowing one of the great empresses of the world in the intimacy of her boudoir. And she had seen her thus intimately as one of us might see her, in the perspective of Europe and the West.

With her I wandered through the museum of the Forbidden City, among porcelains that gleamed like precious jewels, carvings of jade, and red lacquer wrought as if by the tools of elves, and embroideries of marvellous intricacy and exactitude. Looking over the sweep of golden roofs of yellow porcelain tiles fantastically curled above the eaves, she said that she had never loved the Forbidden City. Even in her time it had seemed old and desolate, full of locked chambers and haunted passageways, so that one scarcely dared venture out of the beaten paths. Even the old Empress did not like to stay there. She liked the summer palace better.

But Princess Der Ling assured me that the life with the old Empress had not been unhappy. There were, of course, minor and unpleasant excitements, when the old lady had a tantrum or the eunuchs must be flogged. There was a continual tale-bearing among the court ladies and plotting among the eunuchs. And her heart was always sad for the pensive young emperor who lived a prisoner beneath his "mother's" eye, lest he should find some way of making China a more modern state, or disturbing some bloodstained and outworn tradition.

But, though she was often weary with standing and dizzy with kowtowing, there was much that was de-

lightful in that life. The old Empress was fascinating, even in those her last days, and had a motherly way with her favourites. It was a pleasant womanly picture she drew of the winsome, unscrupulous old autocrat, with her gusts of love and tenderness, her delight in fine clothes and picnics and games, her dark secrets, her whims and naïveté, and her sentimental moods of piety, when everybody in the palace must think of his sins and burn candles to Buddha. Though the days were made up mostly of an endless laying out of jewels and fine garments, and interminable meals which her ladies must eat standing in her presence, there was also a good deal of pure girlish fun, goings to and fro between the palaces, picnics and excursions on the lake, birthdays and feast-days, and ever and anon the appearance of gorgeous presents. Through it all Princess Der Ling had certain minor troubles all her own, growing out of the fact that she was less a Manchu in breeding than in birth. For the old Empress would make her pray to Buddha, and was determined to marry her to a prince of her own choosing, and she was hard put to it at times to escape a husband.

"She was charming," she said of the old Empress. "She could make you love and hate her by turn, but of course she was odd. All crowned heads are eccentric. I was presented at various European courts, and I never saw a king or queen or prince of high degree that wasn't a little queer. It's bound to be so. They live such abnormal lives." So she talked, and I marvelled at her, as at one returned from the dead.

The strangeness of the fact that a girl so fresh and young should speak as a contemporary of imperialism so legendary came to me again when I was admitted to the Forbidden City itself. Forbidden it is, even to this

day—a sombre and desolate place, but full of a kind of dusty dignity—not so fresh as the summer palace, not so pretty and graceful and open, blanketed in the shadow of trees, and a prey to grasses and wild creatures. It was lonely with the loneliness of a great empty hall, with such loneliness as belongs only to spots where human beings have once lived, desolate, full of vague presences and inarticulate memories of death. I walked along the beautiful avenues, fearfully, as if they were empty corridors and the sound of my own footsteps might echo in the dust. The grass was all unshaven and forlorn, and the lake a little shabby, for the dead leaves clung about the lotus flowers, and there was on the surface a kind of dust or scum, as if no living thing had cared to frolic in the waters.

I followed trails among the great rocks and through the groves, and peeped into halls where gold and vermilion gleamed wanly through dust. Many of the buildings were ruined and falling into decay. The mythical beasts that stood in a fixed parade upon their curled roofs were strangled among grasses. Even Buddha had not been spared the universal oblivion. I came to a marvellous structure in his honour built of yellow porcelain bricks, on each of which there was a bas-relief of Buddha, hundreds and hundreds of Buddhas, moulded in imperial yellow. But brick was falling away from brick, and more than one Buddha lay face downward, battered, in the dust. Sometimes I stirred a wild bird, which flew cheeping among the bushes; but, for the most part, the presence that enters in and inhabits lonely places had made of these parks its dwelling-place and laid its oppression upon their peace.

Yet for all the youth of the figures who were part of the old tradition, for all the stir of the present, the cen-

tring here of so much of the wild formless life of Northern Asia, there is in imperial Peking the solemnity of death. It is a deeper solemnity than that which dwells about the palaces and temples of Northern India, for it expresses an older tradition and a more persistent life. The test of a civilization, as of a personality, is its grandeur in decay. Things ephemeral or careless or inharmoniously conceived crumble and grow shabby. But a civilization nobly conceived and honestly built and rooted deep in the verities of life seems to grow more beautiful as the transient prettiness of its gala times fall way, and all that remains takes on the sombre immortality of indefinite survival. And in this there is hope of yet another spring.

BOOK THREE

CHAPTER XVI

THE CHAPERONAGE OF JACOB WANG

EVEN more impressive than the Forbidden City in its abandonment is the great Altar of Heaven. Here, in the old days, the Emperor used to give sacrifice to Heaven for his people, remembering a power and a worship which outdated Buddha and the newer gods. Even in the time of Confucius the altar was immemorially ancient, and no one could tell who first designed its white terraces, nor what faith went into the sculpturing. Yet, for all the more positive and triumphant glory of temple and cathedral which humanity has builded since, there remains something singularly impressive in this great agnostic altar beneath the open sky. The thoughts of the men who fashioned it have perished, but this, the product of their hands, has outsoared all sects and bigotry and partial knowledge and has emerged purified by time.

Whatever face the secret beyond our mortal science may wear to a man, it seems that he could feel this a noble thing—this great marble space, open to the sky, reared to the honour of Heaven, to a spirit that was felt to be above all gods and Buddhas and demons of wind and waters, to something that moves behind the flight of the clouds and the stately march of the stars, something that dwells deeper than the deepest blue of heaven at noonday, and shines invisible behind the transparency of dawn. The dust has shrouded Buddha in the old scarlet temples and about the imperial shrines of Con-

fucius the grasses have grown thick; but the Altar of Heaven still stands in undiminished dignity, consecrated to a kind of immortality by snow and rain and starshine and the winds and diurnal radiances of the sky.

I count it a tribute to its peculiar quality that I felt the grandeur of this great structure, for I saw it under auspices which were far from solemn. I had accepted the escort of the Diplomat. The Diplomat was the Englishman who had so courteously assisted Little Mum that first evening. For this kindness, I cherished faith in him; he had shown himself, I thought, beyond dispute, a gentleman. For the rest, he was an airy soul, whose spirit danced like sunlight in running water, a man of infinite resource and sagacity in the handling of ladies. He constituted himself my escort, without introduction or invitation; but he made himself, from the first, as welcome as a summer breeze.

He had a ceaseless flow of compliment, which he inserted parenthetically in other discourse. Into such a parenthesis he slipped without warning, and was out again and sliding merrily down the safe highways of speech before the most fastidious lady could object. He would tell you that Japan could never fight America (indeed, America could win in any war with such girls to inspire her boys) and the talk of Japanese statesmen was mostly pose (which reminded him that one of the lovely things about you was your utter lack of pose, your sweet honesty). The Japanese, like other Orientals, had no sentiment (nor some ladies he could mention, either. Their hearts were ivory), though Japanese girls were rather sweet little things (but not as attractive as American girls—oh, no! It took blue eyes and sunlit hair to dazzle a man). And so on indefinitely.

Most of his remarks were not quite so obvious. But

this was the formula, applied with dash or ingenuity, with intimacy or tenderness, in accordance with the lady he was at the moment engaged in adoring. And he was so light-hearted, withal, and so generous that she must be a prig and a prude who would resent this pretty offering at her shrine of the flowers of speech.

It was this merry soul who chose to show me the Altar of Heaven. As a means to that end he produced an automobile and a Chinese guide, a portly Oriental with the manners of a benevolent deacon. His name was Jacob Wang. Who christened him I cannot tell, but Jacob he was, and Jake for short. The Diplomat treated him with airy familiarity as a friend and a brother, and Jake followed the Diplomat with the steady illumination of a smile that had a kind of metallic gleam, as if his yellow face were made of brass. So Jacob Wang, the Diplomat, and I set out to see the Altar of Heaven. Jacob was a kind of concession to propriety on the Diplomat's part. He had brought him, I think, in lieu of a chaperon. If this was Jacob's own conception of his duties, he certainly performed them efficiently.

The sun was setting when we rode down the dusty, deserted avenue of trees, and leaving the car, walked toward the gleam of white marble. There stood the beautiful thing, circle above circle of white steps ascending to an open marble space, exquisitely carved and fashioned. Nothing more, neither joss-sticks nor incense nor candles, nor image of any sacred thing. The sunset coloured the marble with faint gleams of rose and mauve and gold, like the tints on the white petals of hepaticas in the spring; and above, over the altar, the scarlet clouds swept away in a procession of flame and fire. Beautiful it was, perfectly conceived and fashioned, and the more beautiful at that moment for

the accidental painting of light. But the Diplomat had seen it before and was not to be subdued to reverence.

"Emperor come once every year," explained Jacob. "Worship here, kneel so." And he made a show of prostration.

"Empress too?" asked the Diplomat. "Empress and pretty ladies all in pretty dresses?"

"No, no," said Jacob. "No empress, no ladies."

"What," said the Diplomat. "No ladies? Didn't the ladies care for Heaven?"

Jacob was inarticulate.

"Oh, I see," said the Diplomat, "Heaven did not like the ladies."

"No," said Jacob. "Heaven no like ladies."

"The more fool Heaven, don't you think, old chap?"

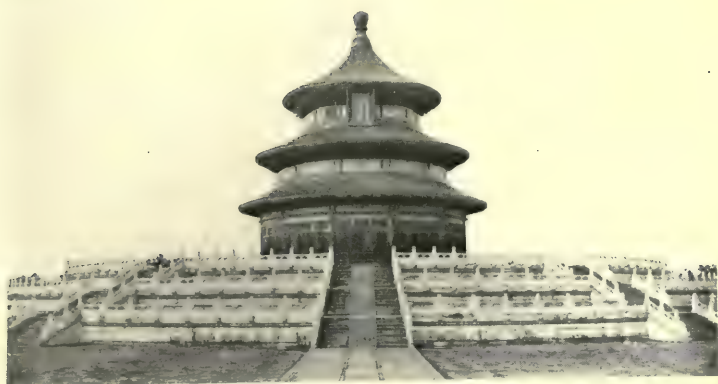
But the Diplomat did not go motoring with a lady for the purpose of holding a conversation with Jacob. "He sticks too tight," he whispered to me. "Let's shake him." We entered the beautiful Winter Temple, a vast circular hall carved and painted in blue and vermilion, as if the whole interior were of stained glass.

"It is wonderful that colouring so vivid, so lavish, should have nothing of barbarism about it," I remarked. "It has even a kind of sobriety in its grandeur."

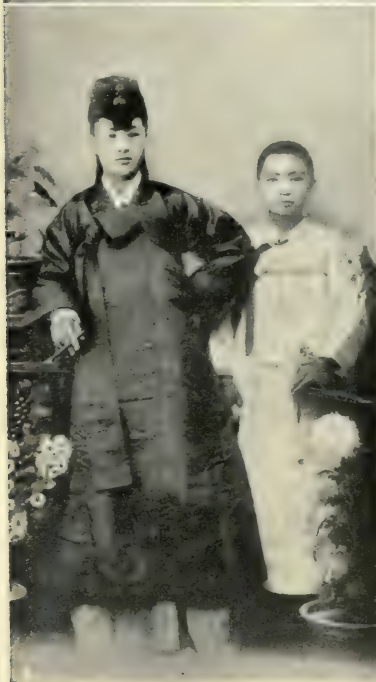
"Yes," he answered absently, looking around for Jacob.

Jacob was not in sight. The Diplomat was not one to miss an opportunity like this. Gently his hand closed over mine.

Immediately a voice said blandly: "Missy no like Winter Temple. Missy will come see Temple of Agriculture." And there stood Jacob, his small glittering eyes fixed upon the surreptitious hand.



The Temple of Heaven, Peking
Hoang Lu Gate, Temple of Confucius, Peking



A suburb of Seoul, City Gate in distance
 Korean Court dancing girl and servant
 Typical old Korean swell

"Jacob," said the Diplomat, trying not to look guilty, "don't you think you ought to watch the car?"

"No, master," said Jacob blandly.

"We don't really need you now, Jacob."

"Missy will see Temple of Agriculture?" persisted Jacob.

"Well, lead on, old boy," said the Diplomat with an air of resignation.

We walked down another avenue of bushy trees. "By the way, Jacob," said the Diplomat, "I left my stick in the car. Will you get it?"

Jacob turned away unwillingly, but he must have had that stick concealed in the folds of his respectable grey silk gown. For a second later when the Diplomat, thinking he had disposed of Jacob, asked, "What time is it by your watch?" and found it necessary to look at the watch on my wrist himself, and let his fingers delay there a moment, up popped Jacob.

"I got stick, master," said he, brandishing the same. "I tell Missy about emperor." And he launched into a marvellous history of royalty expressed in a fine confusion of misplaced words. Thereafter nothing could budge him, nor stem the flow of mutilated words which he called English. The sun had set now; and we rode away in the wake of Jacob in a world suddenly gone ashen. Firmly guarded, straitly chaperoned, I cast a discreet glance here and there in passing at vestiges of old godliness. Nor was the Diplomat released from surveillance till he had deposited me on the steps of the hotel.

The evening while we were walking up and down on the wall listening to a Chinese band play "Over There," to an international crowd, I saw Jacob again. He was marching along, serene, lordly, self-righteous as ever,

with a cigarette between his teeth, and in his wake trotted a little Chinese maiden in green silk trousers, painted and shameless, with eyes of invitation for every one or any one above her own cigarette.

"I suppose," whispered the Diplomat, "that he is chaperoning her too."

CHAPTER XVII

"MADAME, I AM A DETECTIVE."

NEXT day, at dawn, a letter from Dorothy blew in, as it were, on the winds of the morning. "I have collected stacks of your love-letters," she wrote. "There is one that is awfully fat and looks interesting. Dad says come on up and cross to Japan with us. So say I for I've got something to show you—a prince! Yea, my dear, a live one, and I ride with him in his automobile."

What this signified I could not tell. Was our Dorothy to be Queen of Tibet or Empress of the Mongols or Czarina of Siberian Russia? In a rush of homesickness, I called my Chinese boy and told him I would leave that night for Korea.

The Diplomat and Jacob put me on the train, the Diplomat metaphorically tearing his hair and dashing in and out of parentheses, and Jacob beaming, cynical, inscrutable, with the memory of all the other ladies who had been parenthetically adored in his small, unblinking eyes. The Diplomat examined my bunk with the air of a connoisseur, and then, circulating airily among the train-guards and "boys," assured them, with a rain of small cash, that I was a very important lady and must be well treated. Then standing out at the window of my compartment, while we waited for the train to pull out, he whispered tenderly that he would exact from me just one promise before I went.

"What is the promise?" said I cautiously.

"Will you dine with me in Tokyo on August 1?"

I promised; he kissed my hand, in the continental style he liked to affect; and the train moved out into the grey twilight. It seemed a little promise then, and one easy to fulfil. But I did not guess what forces were to stand in the way of it, nor all the new life that was to flower for me in the sunshine of that Oriental summer.

Meanwhile the immediate prospect before me was nothing to allure the imagination. I was in for one of those interminable dusty journeys which make up so much of the traveller's wanderings over the vast continent of Asia. Hour after hour the desolate land slipped by, while I swallowed dust by the mouthfuls, with periodical lubricants in the shape of dinners that dragged through interminable courses. There were soup that tasted as if it came from the rain-barrel, sodden fish, and meat that had lost its first youth, culminating in after-dinner decorations in the shape of bland cheese that had left its flavour somewhere en route, and a discoloured substance that was called coffee. Two days and two nights of it I suffered, with no companion in my loneliness, except an American salesman of automobiles and a gigantic Russian of uncertain destination.

The salesman amused me with tales of his adventures in selling automobiles to well-to-do Koreans. He was a cheerful person, fat and dark, and inadequately supplied with hair, and he talked with the accent of the typical American on the English stage. "You see the Mikado," he said, "the King of Japan, he's called the Mikado—well, you see he's the father of his people, and his people are all just like sons in his family. In one way you might say the Koreans aren't his sons exactly—more like stepsons that wasn't consulted on the marriage, you'd say. But just like a father don't want his

sons to waste their money—specially if they are stepsons and the old man's got his eye on the cash-box himself—so he don't want the rich Koreans to waste theirs. So when one of these little chaps they call Korean nobles or princes wants to buy a car, he has to ask the Mikado—see?"

"And do you enjoy dealing with the Mikado?"

"Don't you believe it," he replied fervently, adding conscientiously, lest I should credit him with moving in such high society, that of course he had nothing to do with it. "It just holds up sales on the other end."

There was another passenger who spoke no English. She was a Russian flapper under the escort of three Russian men, all equally bearded but graduated in size, like Goldilocks with the three bears. She was a thing to gladden the eye, beautiful with the luscious, radiant beauty which seems the peculiar birthright of young Russian girls. Her hair hung over her shoulders in two long shining plaits which were of a kind of sunset gold, browned with warm shadows. Her skin had the colouring and downy smoothness of an apricot, and her deep blue green eyes and slightly pouting lips had a certain freshness as of a garden in the morning. I saw many of these Russian girls of the bourgeoisie fleeing from Russia, and I think I never saw creatures in whom youth wore an aspect so nymphlike and dewy.

I was glad the little girl was there to light the landscape for me. Otherwise the journey was dull enough. About six o'clock on the second evening we came to the border between Manchuria and Korea and passed under the jurisdiction of the Tenno of Japan. Then a thousand years fell away like a torn garment, revealing efficiency up-to-date, spruce and neat and unmistakably Japanese. The pig-tailed and ragamuffin Chinese in at-

tendance on us disappeared in favour of rosy, small men in uniform, very rapid, very neat, and ornamented each with an ineradicable smile. Pleasant demonstrative little souls they seemed, and though I was assured by American and Korean alike of the depths of their perfidy and that of the nation from which they came, for a time I loved them one and all. More colonial efficiency appeared in the form of a clean little inn, where Japanese girls, knock-kneed and willing and not too intelligent, served a dinner that had about it a kind of freshness.

Meanwhile the passport officials appeared—an endless series of them—and each one inquired after the health of my ancestors unto the third and fourth generation. As soon as I was delivered from these seekers after knowledge, a dapper little fellow in uniform walked up to me, and majestically motioning to me to halt, delivered himself thus: “Madame, I am a detective. How old are you?” Very naïve they are, these Japanese detectives, and incorrigible nuisances.

These borderline ceremonies I had to go through without assistance. But at last I succeeded in depositing myself on a train bound for Seoul, the capital of Korea. The salesman escaped from his own corps of detectives just in time to wave good-bye to me through the window. There seemed to be neither white man nor Korean on the train. I looked out into the lights that wavered and dimmed and slipped away, and then into the moving darkness without. Once more I was launched upon the night in unknown places, and the dawn I knew would shine on another people strange to me and waken into life still other alien tongues.

Next morning I looked out on a lovely land, preternaturally fresh and green beneath the light mists of rain

that swept it, walled round with hills delicately blue. It had a fine air of colonial prosperity. There were piles of lumber at the neat little railroad stations, and produce in cases and bales. At first I saw no Koreans, only Japanese officially clad.

By and by the Koreans appeared. They were a listless, dignified lot, clad like the members of some freak religious sect. The men wore tight trousers and long coats of unbleached linen, and funny little hats which looked like top hats improvised for amateur theatricals. The women wore dresses with tight yokes and full skirts, more or less like a Mother Hubbard, except that the yoke and the skirt parted company and showed some inches of brown skin. Here and there were kiddies in bright coloured replicas of their parents' garb.

We came at last to a great and splendid city held in the hollow of the mountains as in a cup, walled with great walls and entered by big red gates. This was Seoul, the capital of the realm. Here the detectives and passport agents were lined up, awaiting their official pabulum in the shape of news about grandmothers, row on row of these agents, and all, it seemed, for the intimidation of little me. But when I said that I wished to go to the Chosen Hotel, as the Bishop had bade me, a hotel lackey, who seemed every whit as big an official as the detectives, whisked me away in a taxi.

We rode past buildings such as might grace Fifth Avenue itself, and up a fine road to the hotel. The Chosen Hotel is a hostelry unparalleled in Asia. It combines all the pretty ways and small daintinesses which the Japanese develop for the delectation of Occidentals, with the luxury of real plumbing in the shape of tiled and nickeled bathrooms and hot water in delicious floods.

Entranced, like one who has come into a king's palace in the wilderness, I was led down the noiseless corridor to my pretty room. The boy deposited my baggage and closed the door behind him. I turned to take possession. A mirror, full length, gleaming, crystalline, caught my eye. Within its depths I saw the figure of a Japanese in a kimono politely bowing to me. What illusion was this? The door was closed. I turned. A little man stood before me, little in stature but magnificent in manner. "Madame," said he, "I am a detective. How old are you?"

A few minutes later I sat down with a sigh of relief. Once more my age and grandmother were disposed of. The door opened. A little man beckoned. It seemed I must follow. Wondering, vexed, trying to remember what injudicious response I may have made to the minions of the Tenno, I followed. This, no doubt, was another detective. I passed down the wide stairway, through a room where a fountain played and a Cupid smiled, out upon a wide veranda that overlooked a garden. An electric sign blazed suddenly like a portent in the heavens. My guide pointed to it.

"Movies," said he.

There was a little movie theatre attached to the hotel, and he had come to drum up trade!

Despite the watchful eyes that had been upon me, despite the feeling that I was within the sacred circumference of the Mikado's power, and my goings in and goings out were now of deep concern to one of the world's great thrones, I must say that I slept securely that night, blessed with the slumber which comes only to those who have survived two nights on an Asiatic railroad.

CHAPTER XVIII

PRINCE AND PAUPER

NEXT day, bright and early, Dorothy's voice sang a greeting over the telephone, and she herself shortly appeared in a rickshaw, very mysterious about her prince, laden with the mighty importance of my collected mail. She volunteered to show me "the little old town," with which she felt herself quite familiar. I had a headache and a bit of fever, but I set forth gallantly, encouraged by Dorothy's assurance that if I were very good, and told her what "he" said in that big letter, I might dine with the prince that night.

I made a tale to suit the occasion, to which Dorothy replied darkly, like one snatching away the veil which hides her true soul, that she was "off men for life." They were either "cavemen," she averred, or else "poor nuts." When I ventured to inquire a little further into these revelations, she waved the matter aside majestically. "Never mind now, my dear," she said with a motherly air. "Perhaps I'll tell you some day."

Making a detour before beginning the formal business of sight-seeing, we paid our respects to her father and mother. The Bishop was holding a conference of pastors, but he came out courteously to speak to me when I passed his open door. Lady I found happily seated amidst all her household gods. For she had moved her furniture from the States to Korea some time since, and was endeavouring to mould one spot by sheer love into a semblance of home. "We can't be here very much," she said wistfully, "but I thought I would make

one place in the Orient seem like home for my husband and children." Yet she saw this place but seldom and for so short a time that it scarcely admitted of the handling and freshening of every dear thing.

Sitting and talking to Lady in peace, I was loath to enter the rickshaw and set forth on Dorothy's whirlwind trail again; for a strange weight and oppression of heat was upon me, and I felt profoundly melancholy for no visible reason. But Dorothy assured me that I must take advantage of her skilful guidance at once or I should never have it. "Dad's going to Japan day after to-morrow. I'm leaving with him, and so are you."

This was news for me, but Dorothy spoke as one having authority and I felt too feeble to protest.

One of the interesting things about Dorothy was that she changed her character every month or so. Her latest qualities, it seemed, were decision, energy, and serious-mindedness. Apropos of the last she said she had decided that "Every one ought to do some serious reading while they are young." So she had begun with the history of Korea.

We had slipped down from the hill on which her house was situated into the main part of the city. A spacious and magnificent city it seemed, full of the most amazing contrasts. The principal streets were wide avenues, lined with bank buildings, post-office buildings, hospitals, and schools—all on a grand scale, western in form and appointment and blatantly new. Among the Japanese who presided over them there was a beaming air of pride, boyish, naïve, as if they were all saying inaudibly: "See what we can do when we really make an effort."

Behind these avenues of modern traffic rose the deserted buildings of the old imperialism—ancient,

sombre, majestic mausoleums of shadows and treasures of dust. For a while Dorothy and I wandered there, past many little palaces, and then through a great open hall, a kind of pavilion with mighty columns like the trunks of forest trees, gaily painted and carved in patterns which reminded me of batik fabrics. This overlooked a lake where the lotus lifted their rosy heads, the only living things in all this waste of death. The family of Dorothy's prince had lived here in the old days, but had been removed now, by their guardians the Japanese, to a fine new palace that looked much like one of the mansions on upper Fifth Avenue.

With the history of the family and all the skeletons in its closets Dorothy's attack of serious-mindedness had made her quite familiar. She told me about "one old dear" who had a "pleasant little way" of sending bombs in boxes of bonbons to the people he didn't like. "He murdered his relatives, too," she added, "but as kings go, he was rather efficient." She also gave me a circumstantial account of concubinage in the palace from the beginning, with an impersonal, unblushing air that her mother could never have commanded.

"And now," she said, "having told you about all these low-brows, who are the only ones up to my level, I'll tell you about a real high-brow, just so's you'll feel natural walking around the palaces." And she proceeded to narrate the story of the Chinese mandarin, who, having been commanded to betake himself from the imperial presence because he had displeased the Emperor, migrated to Korea and set himself as a sort of king over the uncivilized tribes he found there. Reducing the rebellious ones to order and drawing up a code of laws, he established among them the beginnings of culture and an orderly state.

About these palaces of the old imperialism, and the banks and office buildings of the new, clustered the native huts, more changeless than either. Perhaps even the people among whom the mythical mandarin first took up his abode had themselves lived just so. From afar these conical structures of mud, thatched with straw, looked like a crop of mushrooms. The people who lived in them were a humble and brow-beaten lot, brow-beaten now most surely, but not for the first time in their history. They crawled about their tasks with the mechanical faithfulness of ants, and so no doubt they had done from time immemorial. The splendour of those great red palaces had been an efflorescence from the submerged decay of their lives, and the caravans that went over the road which we could see winding its way over the mountain to Peking, had carried away the sweat of their brows, in the shape of gifts from emperors to emperors. Mandarins had squeezed them, and the ruffians that came with Hideyoshi's army had cut off their ears by the thousands and had borne them away to make a monument of conquest in Kyoto. Now the Japanese work them as coolies, though here and there one of them grows rich by trading his earnings, and aspires to be a gentleman. The Japanese claim that the vast substratum of Korean people, who have always lived as the beasts that perish, are better off now than ever before. This may be so, but an ancient wrong does not make a modern right.

Yet they were not the ones who had lost most under the Japanese rule. In any country it is not the really poor who suffer under the usurper, for generally they suffer under any rule. It is the gentry, the intelligent and independent middle classes, who associate with the love of their country, and the sense of national freedom,

the happiness that they have made for themselves by industrious appropriation of the resources of their own soil, and by loyalty to the traditions of their own race.

As I thought of these things, Dorothy was enlarging on the subject of her prince. Prince he was, indeed, and of one of the old royal strains of Korea. Dorothy had merely sat in the back seat of his car while he showed the city to her father, but this was enough to establish in her mind a romantic contact with royalty. She said he was "cute" and she had a "case on him." They were invited to dinner with him that night, and her father had got the invitation extended to include me.

By this time my cheeks were burning with fever, and the world was swimming dizzily around me. Clutching my rickshaw and fighting with the wheels of fire on which my head seemed to be spinning, I told Dorothy unsteadily that I cared more for my own bed at that moment than any palace. All concern and advice, she immediately escorted me back, and telephoned for a missionary doctor post haste. For two days I lay in my bed and the royal dinner came and went without me. So, too, the day of Dorothy's departure. By that time, though convalescent, I was a little shy of Oriental railroads and decided to follow her later. So, after exacting from me promises of self-cherishing and care in rest and diet, Dorothy once more went on her rapid way.

On the afternoon following her exit, while I lay low in my room oppressed with a headache and the ennui of her going, a basket of roses came up to me. There was no card. Yet it seemed to me that they were flowers which must have grown in a garden, full of the warmth of June, and visited by butterflies and bees. It was some days before I discovered the donor.

CHAPTER XIX

A CHAPTER OF LOVE-AFFAIRS

AT her departure, Dorothy left me a note from a missionary, remarking that it contained "bad news," and advising me not to open it till I was "well enough to stand the shock." It proved to be an invitation from an evangelical lady to go calling with her among the families of Christian Koreans. Across it Dorothy had written, "My dear, I pity you."

Yet, when the calls were over, I rather thought Dorothy might have saved her pity. Though I have found Oriental Christians, in general, far more interesting than most forms of missionary publicity would lead one to believe, the Koreans are perhaps the most interesting of all. For to Korea the Christian propaganda has meant more than private conversion. To a people bowed down beneath a hateful rule, restricted even in the teaching of their own language, insulted, humiliated, and wounded well-nigh beyond endurance in their national pride, the American missionaries came with a vital alternative to a hateful culture. Imprisoned as they were in a land no longer theirs, unable even to emigrate without Japanese permission, the new faith brought them contacts with great far-away nations, a sense of dignity as men, and a consciousness of international brotherhood. In the churches they found a form of social organization which provided a genuine discipline in democratic self-government, and a unit of association in patriotic effort. So the churches were not

only religious bodies; they were rallying points for nationalistic sentiment, little political training schools.

Yet it was not of politics that I talked to the women of the Christian families, for women have always other matters to consider. The first home we visited was a comfortable establishment, with an air of middle-class prosperity about it. Through an aperture in the outer wall we entered into a tiny court-yard set with miniature, deformed trees, after the Japanese fashion. Then we stepped up into a low house which ran through a long series of rooms, immaculately clean, with a sparse furnishing of American chairs and chiffoniers, and many fine Korean chests inlaid with brass and mother-of-pearl or bound with brass.

We were made welcome by the mother-in-law. She was a Christian gentle-woman of middle age, with a sweet, wrinkled face and smooth, parted hair, slightly grey, but heavy and shining. She had the air of one who looked well to her household and conducted it in ways sweet, tranquil, and orderly. About her establishment there was the peculiar charm of a well-kept house in the late afternoon, when all the work of the day is accomplished, the last inch of brass is polished, the last grain of dust vanquished—when the sunlight falls serenely upon the shining floors, and the hot water sings over the charcoal ready for the evening meal or tea for a passing guest, and the women of the house have changed their dresses and are ready to play with their needles among dainty fabrics or chat with friends awhile.

While she was making us welcome, the daughter-in-laws, in fresh, white linen, came forth to display their babies, while the mother set a cool, fruity drink and cakes like nabiscos on a lacquer table, round which we

sat on the floor. As we talked, the rat tat tat of maids ironing the linen of the family in the kitchen court, by beating it with polished sticks, kept time to our speech.

The most interesting member of the family was the wife of the eldest son, whose Christian name was Mary. She had the sweetness and gentle piety of old Sunday-school books, and not a little hidden fervour. My companion said to me: "Mary had one of the most wonderful trousseaus that has been seen hereabouts." And then to Mary: "Won't you show us what a Korean bride wears when she may have all the fine clothes she wishes?"

Thereupon the servants brought in two inlaid chests, and Mary began to unpack from the many and cunningly contrived drawers an endless series of billowing red and pink skirts of heavy brocaded silk, and funny little short jackets that came scarcely below the armpits and were tied together with strings. The wedding dress itself was scarlet. There were gowns for all occasions—gowns in which to receive her husband, gowns in which to go back to call on her family for the first time after marriage, and the like. There was also jewelry, of jade and pearl and amber, and watches and rings in foreign style. There was a little bonnet trimmed with fur with streamers that hung down behind. The general fashion of the clothes, and the manners of the girl herself, reminded one of some Victorian bride or an Oriental version of the heroines of Godey's *Lady's Book*.

I noticed that she placed the simpler garments in one chest and the more beautiful silk and jewelry in the other.

"These," I said, pointing to the plainer wardrobe, "are the dresses for every day, are they not? And those are for parties and festivals?"—for the Orientals in gen-

eral make a greater distinction than we between party clothes and everyday clothes.

"No," she said, pointing to the richer chest, "that is God's chest. This one is mine."

The missionary explained. Though she was a petted bride and had all that she desired for herself, she had no means of getting ready cash for contributions to the church and to causes in which she was interested. So she had picked out the best of her wedding finery and the gifts of jewels which she continually received from her husband and friends and had laid them away in "God's chest," to be sold and converted into money for benevolences whenever she wished.

She was a Christian girl of the type that is largely passing away among us, a type that had its own charm. She was not beautiful, for her features seemed a bit rudimentary, but she had the satiny skin and hair and the look of good grooming and innocence which prosperity and a protected life give to a woman. Gentle and graceful, and a little melancholy, she might have been the heroine of some Korean Tennyson. I thought that her pensiveness was just a general odour of sanctity, the air of one who kept herself unspotted from the vulgarities and frivolities of the world. But I found later that there was another cause. Although she had been married a year, there was no prospect that she would give her husband a son. Christians though his parents were, and theoretically monogamists, on this one point their traditions were stronger than their acquired faith. A son there must be, and if she did not produce him shortly, her husband must take a secondary wife. He was fond of her, loved her, indeed, in the poor blind fumbling way in which a very ordinary man will love a saintly wife whom he feels too good for him. But on this point he

was a little restive against her prejudice. It was not only jealousy on her part. She felt it degrading to share her husband with another woman, a daily living in sin. So far she had persuaded him to wait. But she felt that his patience would not last much longer, and the little wee creature who held her happiness in its hands showed no signs of entering upon this mortal life.

But there were Christian girls of a more modern type than Mary, and at that time a mission school was all agog with the romance of one of them.

She was an intelligent, womanly lass who believed that a girl should choose her own husband and love him in faithfulness but independence of spirit. Her parents were rather liberal-minded folk with a leaning toward Christianity, until it came to marrying their daughter. Then they reverted to type. Without consulting her they chose a husband of whom she knew nothing, and sent word that she was to come home from the mission school and be married in the orthodox style.

She protested. But to no avail. The missionaries sympathized, but could not undertake to protect her. Divorced from her parents and the husband whom they had chosen, she had no means of subsistence. She yielded and went home. There was a great feast and a trousseau full of scarlet and pink petticoats. Patiently she went through the ridiculous and barbarous customs of a Korean wedding, sitting mute and blinded with a great weight of bronze on her head, the martyr of a feast which seems intended for the delectation of every one but the bride.

Now, it is a custom that, when the ceremony is over and the bride is left alone with her husband, she has dumbly to submit to a siege of taunting and teasing at his hands—that he may know he has married a model

of wifely patience and obedience. Serenely and in perfect silence she is to carry out the first behests of her lord, however brutal these may be. So, in the course of time, this Christian maid was left alone with the husband whom she had never seen. Forthwith he addressed to her a taunting word which she received calmly in silence. He continued. She might have been Griselda herself, so perfect was her deportment, so unvexed her face. At last he said:

"This is a funny wife I have married. She can't talk."

Now the patience of Christian wives is not unlimited. Suddenly she opened her mouth and replied:

"I can if you want me to."

"I do," he said in delighted accents. "I want you to answer me a few questions. In the first place, did you want to marry me?"

"No," she replied.

By this time her tongue was unloosed. "Did you want to marry me?" she asked.

"No," he answered.

He studied the calm face before him, and then asked curiously: "Are you really sorry?"

This was not half as bad as she expected. With a little smile, she answered: "It might have been worse."

"I think," he said gravely, touching her hand, "that on the whole we are lucky."

The ice was broken now. He, too, was a Christian. He, too, had rebelled at this forced marriage. He was delighted to discover that he had won a girl whose ideas were like his own. Before the first hour of his wedded life had passed, they had arranged it all. She would go back to school and finish her course. Then they would emigrate to the Pacific isles, and shake the dust of Korea and its barbarous ways from their feet. Some-

where they would set up a home which knew neither wives nor mothers-in-law nor secondary wives, nor undue subordination of the daughters of Eve.

She came back to the school, bubbling with joy, unblushingly in love with the husband who had been wished on her. For weeks the old halls rang with the tale, and one girl confessed that she had prefixed to the Lord's Prayer, which she said daily, a private request that such luck might be hers, too, when her time came.

It is with something of melancholy that I recall these love-tales now, for less than a year later a revolution in Korea made terrible wreckage of these Christian homes. The manifesto of the Koreans announcing their peaceable intentions to proclaim, in a temporary cessation of all labour, their desire for freedom should be immortal in the annals of revolt.

"1. This work of ours is in behalf of truth, justice, and life, and is undertaken at the request of our people to make known their desire for liberty. Let there be no violence.

2. Let those who follow us show every minute this same spirit with gladness.

3. Let all things be done with singleness of purpose to the end that our behaviour may be honourable and upright."

Honourable and upright it was; but not so the Japanese reprisals. In the bloody madness that followed, even the home to which Lady brought her dear possessions from over the seas was burned to the ground, and more than one Christian girl came to a savage end.

CHAPTER XX

THE GOLD-DIGGER

WHILE I was still adjusting myself to the emptiness of life without Dorothy, a new friend appeared upon my path.

Her name was Mrs. Kingsley, and for a day or two she seemed quite inexplicably devoted to me. She was a dainty little creature with a tumbled mop of coarse black hair, a skin of porcelain delicacy and whiteness, and black-fringed violet eyes. At first I thought her one of those specimens of petted wifehood one finds everywhere in the servant-ridden Orient. But she told me the most astounding tales. Her husband was an engineer, engaged in surveying the most inaccessible parts of China, Mongolia, and Manchuria. She went with him everywhere, living in sedan-chairs and on houseboats, and in the North on horseback, day after day, camping by night beneath the open sky. She was now waiting for him to join her on an excursion into Mongolia, which, for a change, they would make in an automobile.

The only other guest at the hotel at that time was a tall, blonde man, ruddy of face and lumbering of movement, who seemed to have no eye for the ladies. I had heard that he was connected with American gold-mining interests in Korea, and dubbed him, for convenience of mental reference, the Gold-digger.

The second night after I met Mrs. Kingsley, as we sat together over coffee on the veranda of the hotel, the Gold-

digger came out and established himself at a table not far away. She smiled at him and nodded.

"Mr. Doty is a friend of my husband's," she said. "Do you mind if I ask him to come over here?"

He came and was introduced. And we three talked of camels versus automobiles as a means of locomotion in Northern Asia. Next day a note came up to my room from him. Wouldn't I come down and have tea with him, and think of something amusing to do afterward? When I came, he said: "I have a confession to make. I have been trying for a week to meet you. I sent you some roses——"

This was my first hint regarding the source of the roses, and I thanked him.

"I wanted to put my card in," he said, "but I was afraid you might think me fresh, and send them packing back where they came from. I watched all the people who came to see you, but I didn't seem to know any one. I even thought of scraping acquaintance with your friend, the pretty flapper, but I thought that wouldn't recommend me. At last I mobilized Mrs. Kingsley. She promised to make friends with you and introduce me."

So this explained the inexplicable devotion of that little lady. I smiled at the story.

"But why," I asked, "did you bother with introductions, seeing that I travelled alone?"

"Well, it was this way," he replied. "Once upon a time I was a freshman in a western college. There the girls—nice girls, too—simply made friends with the fellows. When you saw a girl you liked, you talked to her and she talked to you, and if you continued to like each other, you were friends. Then I came to Harvard, green as I could be. One day I saw a pretty girl on the streets of Cambridge. She looked friendly. So I caught

up with her, and asked if she minded if I walked along with her.

“‘Very much,’ she answered, sweet and cool as ice-cream. I went on talking in a clumsy way, trying to placate her. She said not a word; she never moved a muscle; she did not look angry or frightened. She just walked along as if I were not there. I felt like an awful fool. Once I thought I saw a flicker of amusement beneath her eyelash. It got worse and worse. I didn’t know how to withdraw gracefully, or how to keep it up. When we came to a corner she turned off, and I just stood there stranded, feeling like a great boob. That taught me a lesson. Thereafter I always got an introduction to any girl I wanted to know east of Buffalo. When I saw you, I said to myself: ‘I will listen to her speech. If she talks as if her grandmother might have come from Boston, there will be social complications in meeting her.’ So I listened the first day, when the pretty flapper came in to see you. Sure enough, you talked like the Atlantic seaboard. So I said, ‘Nothing doing, old man,’ and began to mobilize social machinery.”

I smiled at the tale. It represented a phase of girlhood psychology which had been mine such a little while back. Where had I left these proprieties, I wondered, and what Oriental influences had annihilated them without my knowledge?

Thereafter we were friends, and Mrs. Kingsley, having performed her function, sank discreetly out of sight. He was a likeable soul, plain of face and plain of manner, simple and direct even to naïveté, but, as it seemed to me, a gentleman. He would talk for hours about his life in the gold-mines, where he was the only educated man in authority over a few rough-neck Americans and hordes of Korean coolies. It was a dull life—dull with

the brutality and ennui of mining life everywhere, intensified by isolation among an alien and undeveloped folk. Such isolation always leads the white man to compound with his own pride by arrogating over his more primitive brothers a superiority which he is engaged in losing as fast as possible. The Gold-digger's reminiscences revealed the texture of his days, made up, as they were, of all manner of sudden and vigorous decisions that must serve as the *deus ex machina* in the little dramas of the camp. A white man would become infatuated with a Japanese girl, and must be made to see reason, which did not mean a marriage ceremony. A Japanese detective would come to camp and must be sent on his way rejoicing and no wiser than he should be. The Presbyterian missionary would make a pastoral call, and must be preserved from just retribution at the hands of men who objected to his diatribes on the subject of whiskey and soda. Or the old Catholic padre would turn up, and his ministrations must be tactfully distributed among those who liked his genial charity on the subject of alcohol and his air of being no better than they. By way of diversion, there were the feats of the Gold-digger's little dog, of whom he spoke tenderly, as a man might speak of a woman. He called her "Sweet-heart," and bought for her boxes of the finest chocolates imported from New York. The Presbyterian missionary discovered this practice and used to consume these chocolates himself, to the Gold-digger's extreme exasperation, remarking: "You don't waste all this good candy on that little dog, do you?" There was also the anxious little Japanese woman who kept the inn, and whose troubles at the hands of hungry men were as numerous as her own offspring. The miners liked to come in and demand "pickled eel's feet," or some such likely delicacy.

When she hesitated, they would swear that it was a favourite American dish, and they could not patronize her unless she produced it. The poor little woman would go hunting right and left among dealers and importers, while the camp inquired daily about the prospects of the feast, and reverberated with laughter when she said yes, she knew the dish quite well. Of course she could cook it. They should have it in a few days.

After a while I reached a deeper level in his psychology. There was a girl at home.

At the age of eight they had played Indian and set up a tent together. When he caught shiners in the brook, she tried to cook them over the open fire, till her mother objected to this ingredient of the feast. So she boiled sweet apples in a can of water instead, and they were both delighted to discover that they really tasted like food. She promised that when they were grown up and had a real house together, she would cook him fried chicken and blackberry pie in unlimited quantities. At fifteen he had carried her books home from school, despite the comments of the other fellows, and had been her lover in a high-school play, on which occasion, for the first time, he had worn a dress suit. At eighteen he had gone East to college, and they had corresponded weekly. When he was a junior she came for his junior prom, and none of the other fellows had a prettier girl or one who was more popular. When he was graduated, she had come again, and he began seriously to wonder when and how he could ask her to marry him.

All this time he had never spoken one word of love to her. He was afraid she wouldn't like it, would laugh at him as she did at the other "fellows" and call him soft. He merely expected to marry her, as she, he ventured to believe, expected to marry him. Then he had signed

this contract for Korea. He thought he would ask her to come out when he got established and could offer her a home. But he went away without saying anything; he didn't have anything to give her yet. He was afraid that, after all, she might refuse him and call him "silly." She had long since ceased to be so free with her promises of joint housekeeping and blackberry pie. For a year or two he wrote to her, but he worried a good deal. She had other suitors. Was it fair for him to stand between her and them? How could he ask her to come to share his wild life?

"Mrs. Kingsley shares her husband's," I ventured to suggest at this point in the story. "And she seems to enjoy it."

"I know it," he answered gloomily. I am afraid Mrs. Kingsley had set him thinking.

He went on. The more he lived up there at the mines, the more presumptuous it seemed to ask a girl like her to give up her home and the delicacies of life for that. So he wrote less and less often. It all began to seem more and more hopeless. He was inarticulate on paper as in speech. He did not try to explain. By and by he just dropped out. She did not marry for three years. Perhaps she did care. He didn't know, but he couldn't let her throw her life away. Now she was married and had a little girl baby.

"I suppose she is happy," he concluded with a sigh, "and has forgotten me. There never was any other girl in my life, never will be, I suppose."

It was a touching story, but exasperatingly futile. My sympathy was with the girl.

Four days after I had met the Gold-digger, I received a cable from Dorothy, urging me to hurry to Japan, where she could take care of me. I smiled at the message and bought my ticket. She had no doubt spent her

whole allowance on that cable and would have to do without lemon squashes and sundry purchases in the way of lacquer boxes and paper lanterns for a month. The Gold-digger put me on the train and looked to the last details of my exodus, including the interview with the detectives. I said good-bye to him reluctantly. The language of compliment was not in his dictionary, and the art of flirtation he had never learned. But in his dumb, faithful, modest way he knew how to serve a woman, and his plain face and sunburned hair hold an honourable place among the friends I met around the world.

One more lonely ride through the verdant and craggy spaces of Korea, and I was out again upon the sea, bound for the shores of Japan.

And again there came to me that dreamlike spirit of beauty which haunts the shores of these isles. It was a dream which often woke to sordid reality, but which never lost its power of magical return. Again that fairy light upon the sea, something twixt sunlight and cloud, soothing the trembling waters into peace. Then the islands appeared like great brooding birds, and the outlines of tall mountains. At that moment the sun, entangled in mists as in a web, shot a long, burnished bar across the steel-blue waters, and the little sailboats, hitherto grey as phantom ships, flamed white and shining, and seemed to dip and fly like flocks of gulls above the waters. The tall mountains drew near, and then trees and little houses, and smoke, and the ugly fronts of foreign buildings. The islands seemed to step aside, and we slid into port, and into the arms, as it were, of a little man who stood on shore, sturdy, statuesque, and calm.

"Madame," he said, "I am a detective. How old are you?"

CHAPTER XXI

THE BISHOP TAKES A HOLIDAY

"ROMANCE has now ceased to sit on my footsteps," I wrote from the depths of pessimism, on my first day in Kyoto. For a moment I was very old and dry of heart and utterly blasé. I felt that I had now seen the world, and I did not like it. The intolerable weariness of the wanderer was upon me, a degree of fatigue of which the stay-at-home has no conception. There comes a point where the eyes cry out upon any more seeing, and the ears plead mercy against any more hearing, and the mind will no longer heed or understand, and the heart faints against any new call upon it for joy or pity, and tortured sense and soul alike, strained and pricked and stretched to more and yet more excitement, collapse in a kind of confusion of agony, a chaos of pain. In such a mood I rattled through the darkness from Shimonoseki to Kyoto, and mentally dickered with steamship agents for the next passage home.

There was indeed some reason for this visitation of weariness, in the idiosyncrasies of the Japanese railroads. I had purchased a first-class compartment, which is somewhat like a stateroom in an American Pullman, though considerably less spacious and comfortable. When the train pulled out, I walked a Japanese gentleman, who began calm preparations to undress and stow himself away in the other berth in that tiny room. I called the train guard and indicated that this was, in my eyes, a bit of a *faux pas*—all in my politest manner

and most euphemistic vocabulary, lest I should offend my fellow passenger who might not understand the squeamishness of foreign ladies in this matter. I suggested that there were Japanese ladies on board. I should be very glad, I said, to share the little cabin with a Japanese lady. But the proposed partnership was impracticable. The train guard was sorry. It would be impossible to make any rearrangements.

In our country the gentleman in the case would promptly betake himself off or force the railroad to make some adjustment. But my roommate had no such intentions. He wore a frock coat and patent-leather boots, but he had put on no western chivalry along with them. As for him, he was now going to undress and go to sleep in that other bunk, and, if I did not like it . . . Whereupon I sharply invited the porter to set my baggage in the corridor, and left him in full possession of the space for which I had paid half. By this time the rumour of my discomfiture had penetrated to ears higher up. A person of more official dignity arrived, recognizing the blunder, annoyed and apologetic, and, I fancy, more or less afraid for his head should I choose to make a fuss. I again suggested a rearrangement of the first-class berths which would give me a Japanese lady as roommate. He said that was impossible. He was shy, flustered, as a Japanese will usually be in a crisis, unable to think out a solution. I then suggested that he might make the gentleman comfortable elsewhere. No, he said, he could not ask the gentleman to move. The gentleman had not objected. Since I was the one who did not like it, it was my part to move. He offered me a place in the long sleeping car.

The long sleeping car was a kind of steerage version of an American Pullman, with double rows of shelves

on each side of a central corridor, and on each shelf was a sleeping Japanese. One of these shelves was vacant. I might occupy it if I preferred. The car was hot and odorous. The sleepers were restless, and not a few of them snored. The little lady in the bunk near mine was car-sick, the boy in the bunk next door ate bananas, and a man two berths away was drunk. But at least there was a kind of chaperonage in the crowd. I succumbed and turned in. So all night long, wakeful, feverish, nauseated, I meditated on the delights of a peripatetic life, and my soul was sick within me.

Day brought a little comfort in a glimpse of dawn across a bit of woodland water, and in the appearance of the railroad station at Kyoto, steaming and glaring in the heat, but the goal of my long nocturnal horror. A few minutes later I was in Dorothy's arms, and began a mental postponement of the sailing for home.

As usual, after the absence of a day or two, I found Dorothy a new creature. Gone was the cynical young woman, hardened before her time, and masking from the world a tragic secret. Something had touched her to eagerness and tenderness, and made a little sister of her, adorable and loving. It was, I discovered, a youth left behind in Peking, who had had the tact to get sick. He was rather immaterial to her, I fancy, until at long distance he developed this interesting condition. Now he sent her a complete account of his symptoms and hinted darkly at an operation. I had my doubts about those symptoms, having myself seen that youth not long since. But what ingenious man of one and twenty, having found a way to melt Dorothy into nursely tenderness, would cultivate the virtue of George Washington? All the portion of her allowance which she had not spent on me, Dorothy had devoted to cabled advice to him.

The Bishop raised no objection, but made it plain that she could not borrow on the next instalment. And Dorothy went about, a joyous martyr, penniless among the bazaars, and dependent on charity for lemon squash.

This youth, it seems, was to go back with us, when we sailed in September, and Dorothy was solicitous for accommodations.

"Marjorie," she pleaded, having spent her eloquence on her father in vain, "Majorie, do see what you can do to get our cabins changed. None of them are really good, and poor Ted's is just awful. It's right where he'll get no air and all the smells from dinner."

"That," said the Bishop, "is what breaks our heart."

The Bishop meanwhile had discovered the fountain of youth. For a minute he was no Bishop, but just a man. None of the churches knew that he was in Kyoto. He had slipped in silently as a mere person, and his sheep did not know his voice. No boy ever made more eager use of a school holiday. Not even the climate could restore him to episcopal dignity while the blessed ignorance of his flock obtained.

The days were hot beyond reason, and very humid. Not the lovely position of our hotel, so high among the wooded hills, nor the voice of a stream that sang all night to the Shinto ghosts below, nor the little breeze that woke the twilight to merriment, had power to inspirit the languid air. Death by suffocation seemed always to wait just outside the circle of the electric fans. Yet though we were already wilting when we dragged ourselves down to breakfast, he would appear brisk and exuberant and ready for action.

"We are to see temples to-day," he would announce. "I have a list of five hundred of them among these hills that are very fine."

And into the sunshine we would ride forth. From hill to hill we travelled, and from sacred grove to grove, not ungrateful to the tradition of Buddha that leaves the uninjured trees of the primeval forest inviolate between the worshipper and the hot heavens. We saw the Clearwater temple, set high on a hill among trees, where a wind on a summer day is the reward of the faithful, and where sinners do blessed penance by standing naked beneath a mountain stream that trickles down over their backs. And we stepped into the cool, dim hall where the 33,333 images of Kwannon, the goddess of mercy, stand, slender, golden, poised in the darkness, like a great hallelujah chorus. Each of these images has eleven heads to see the sorrow of the world, and a thousand hands outstretched to help.

Grotesque as the image seems to the mind, it is lovely in execution. The little heads are like a crown above the one sweet face, and the thousand hands are like the feathers of great angel-wings outstretched—delicate, eager, flying hands, instinct with spiritual life, and no two quite alike in gesture and unspoken pity. And the infinite multiplication of these crowns that are yet watching heads, and these angel-wings that are hands of mercy, in that great hall of darkness, where the 33,333 images gleam, range on range, like stars out of night, acts on the mind with a singular hypnotism, swinging one out of the common world into a blank rapture of seeing. But the old Buddhist monk who stood guard over this dim, cool hall of goddesses was obviously dying of tuberculosis, and the cough that he could not restrain rattled the golden images and the 33,333,000 hands of mercy with a harsh, sinister sound.

By evening, three spent but hopeful countenances faced the Bishop across the dinner table. Now at least



From hill to hill we travelled and from sacred grove
to sacred grove



The festival begins with the annual début of the God
in human society



The temporal and spatial location of the main pageant remained a mystery

there was nothing more to see for this day. But, as we approached dessert, he would remark, "Do you mind omitting the final decorations? The rickshaws are waiting to take us to the theatre."

Not to one theatre either, but to *all* of them! Under his jubilant, tireless leadership we would ride through the tinsel gaiety of theatre street, stopping at every box office to buy a ticket. We made one of an intimate little group seated on cushions, before a revolving stage whereon sat a ballad singer who chanted in falsetto notes an epic version of the Russo-Japanese War, and we even shared the tea of our fellow spectators. We listened through one act of a drama of Tokyo high life in Occidental style, wherein the part of the heroine was taken by a graceful boy, with mincing manners. We attended a movie, where an impassioned expositor was interpreting to an astonished audience a Wild West film imported from America, but deleted, by the Japanese censor, of kisses. And when, at one o'clock, we stumbled off to bed, we heard the Bishop cheerfully mapping out a programme of sight-seeing to begin on the morrow at six.

Among the excursions that he planned in this brief, touristic interval of pastoral life was a visit to the imperial palaces in Kyoto. For this the permits must be obtained from the Imperial Household through our own ambassador, with some form and ceremony, and the granting of them is supposed to be an indication that you are not of too hopelessly common clay. Before the imperial permission arrived, the Bishop was summoned to a conference at Karuizawa, and, in three hours, he and Lady and Dorothy were off, leaving the odds and ends to their effects to be collected by me. I intended to join them later, after I had seen the pageant of the

Gion Matsuri, and had carried to a satisfactory conclusion the researches into the rich old life of Kyoto which I had begun with the Bishop. Just as they were leaving, four long envelopes arrived, all marked and sealed with the hieroglyphics of the Imperial Household.

"If you can use these things," said the Bishop, bestowing them all on me, "they are at your service."

I did use them—but in a most unexpected manner—of which more anon. Meanwhile, Dorothy's arms were about my neck, and she was pouring into my ears a volume of advice which dealt with every conceivable subject, from the disposition of her blue blouse, which I was to rescue from the cleaner, to my conduct in the presence of some not impossible He. In a few minutes they had departed, taking the sunshine with them, but leaving me the documents from the Imperial Household for comfort.

CHAPTER XXII

THE GION MATSURI

LIFE was very dull in that beautiful city which sits like a queen among her silvery hills, and all mortality fainted in the heat by day. Only the nights would flame into gaiety, with romping and laughter in the tea-houses that lighted the river-bank, and a ghostly glow of stone-lanterns in the temple retreats. And, after four o'clock tea, when a little breeze floated out from the clouds of sunset, I would travel out alone in a rickshaw, to see the city bloom softly into light, and the little grey houses open their hearts to the world and stage their simple life against their own inward glow. In these lonely night wanderings there was a kind of pensive happiness. Yet I pined a good deal, I remember, and scanned the register of the hotel for guests who might promise companionship, with hope daily renewed and daily disappointed.

So it happened that I saw the preliminary festival of the *Gion Matsuri* alone. The *Gion Matsuri* is one of the most famous festivals in Japan. It is said to have originated more than a thousand years ago as a propitiatory offering to the gods against a plague which devastated the city. It begins with the annual début of a god in human society. Once a year this god, who inhabits a red lacquer palanquin, is taken from the Gion temple in Kyoto and given a bath in the river and an airing which lasts nearly a fortnight. The god greatly enjoys this little holiday. It is the only excitement in

an otherwise dusty and drowsy existence in the depths of the old temple. So at least I was told by some of the boys who carry him on their backs. They say it is easy to take him out of the shrine, but hard, very hard, to get him to go back.

I saw the god emerge that hot night in Kyoto and fell for a moment under his strange enchantment. As I came through the night shadows of the Shinto grove, I saw temple-courts glowing with lanterns. And thither by all the ways of the forest scraping feet and smiling brown faces were converging, not uproariously as in a Western crowd, but with a certain intentness and pleasure as if all were silently possessed with one vision and anticipation.

Suddenly there was a shout and a flare of fire. Boys sped from the temple, waving bundles of burning fagots that shed red coals and hot ashes in passing. The people stooped and gathered these coals into basins, scrambling for them like beggar boys for pennies. This flaming passage of the boys from the temple into the night shadows and afar down a hidden road to the river was to cleanse the air against the coming of the god. So at least an affable gentleman in a kimono and foreign shoes explained to me.

Even as he spoke, I heard a kind of chanting shout among the temple lanterns, and the palanquin of the god swooped from the temple on the shoulders of myriads of dancing men. Joyously he burst forth, like one delivered at last from a year of ennui, and the men who carried him swayed and swung their heavy burden in the spirit of his delight. They moved with a curious ragging movement, hypnotic, infectious. It was like the entrance of the Bacchantes in a Greek play. Indeed, as my friend in the kimono and the foreign shoes volun-

teered, Bacchus, in the form of saké, had materially assisted in the jubilation and the god's release.

I don't know how it happened, but that reflection on the subject of religion and alcohol was my last conscious and detached thought in the matter of this festival. I came to, for a moment, as from a dream, to find myself part of a great swaying crowd of lanterns and scraping shoes, moving on and on through the night in the wake of that heaving palanquin; and then I forgot again. My identity, my foreign prejudices, were merged in the strong primitive force of this crowd emotion that was irresistible and causeless as the enthusiasm of a great football game. Once or twice I felt a fleeting consciousness of the strangeness of it all—the hosts of alien faces, the swaying, shouting palanquin bearers, sweeping through the darkness like a wind. Then I forgot again; for through it all there was a curious, passionate joy, elemental, senseless, voluptuous.

Only when we came to a halt at the river's edge and felt around us the sober outlines of the hills and the quietude of the far-off stars, did I come to as from intoxication. Soberly, wearily, I detached myself, and stood by while they washed the red lacquer palanquin in the river. It seemed a childish ceremony. Suddenly I felt very old, very grave, with the puritan gravity of our race which long ago transmitted the mysterious, sensuous exultation of pagan religion into moral energy.

The cessation of movement had partly broken the spell for every one. Lanterns and clacking shoes began to wander off in all directions into the darkness. In a moment, in that swift, uncanny way in which crowds in Japan suddenly disappear, the scene of brilliance and excitement was snuffed out like a flame in the darkness. As I walked home, every one seemed to be already asleep

in the little grey houses, and nothing was abroad in all the city, save a lonely flute somewhere in the velvet darkness of a Shinto grove.

A few mornings later there was a processional pageant in the streets which lasted the better part of a day. The guests of the hotel were obsequiously marshalled into seats of vantage on the balcony of Kuroda's bronze shop, overlooking the street. They had flocked in over night from more popular tourist haunts, and were prepared for immediate fitting. At first I could not see an interesting personality among them, though I scanned them hopefully and smiled at every one, till one man rose gracefully and cordially from his seat, and, in a voice whose sweetness of tone and finish of accent contrasted with the broad twang of an American nearby, offered his place to me. I slipped into his seat; and he stood, silent, behind me, all intercourse apparently ended in the courtesy.

But a minute later a Japanese in the white pilgrim's costume fainted in the street below, and the murmur of pity that rose precipitated the whole group on the balcony into conversation. The gentleman from whom I had received the seat, remarked, "Poor fellow! He has walked a long way in the sun to obtain merit by the sight of this thing. Strange, what absurdities religion precipitates these people into!"

"I haven't the heart to scorn them for it," I answered. "Most religion seems pathetic."

It was one of those remarks which, sometimes, by accident, tear away all the superficial and conventional barriers between personalities. He answered it, and we fell at once into earnest talk; and thence into shallower gossip and an exchange of notes of common acquaintanceship. He knew the Bishop slightly; had, indeed,

mentioned some phase of his conduct with admiration in a recent newspaper article, as a contrast to the ways of less tactful dispensers of the gospel—and across his path Dorothy had blown like a wind of April, leaving a memory of freshness. So we talked far into the morning. And when the last scarlet float had straggled by, and the music that was like a tuneless tinkling of glass had ceased, we were both sorry that it was over, and yet unwilling to presume upon this accidental contact.

“Perhaps you will come here to see the rest of the pageant this afternoon?” he ventured.

“Yes,” I said.

But promises that depend on Japanese performances go the way of other best-laid plans. The pageant that afternoon did not pass Kuroda’s, nor take place according to schedule, though schedules of various sorts were announced. It was all casual, wayward, vague as to time and place. One seemed to run into knights of the Middle Ages in lacquered armour and priests in old brocade at every street corner, and here and there, from some scarlet float temporarily stranded, the waxen figures of old heroes nodded inanely and forlornly. But the temporal and spatial location of the main pageant remained a mystery, and in trying to find it among the débris of the festival, we lost each other. Then I remembered that I had given him no means of locating me at my abode. As for him, he said he had come in from Nara, and was returning that evening. Where, I wondered, was Nara? As I stood on my little balcony, like one who sees a fortune snatched suddenly from beneath his hand, a fussy little policeman in white came strutting up. Had I not heard the announcement? No, I had not heard the announcement, and, if I had, I should not have believed it. Believing the announce-

ments regarding the pageant had left me stranded here, a forlorn and deserted maiden. Thereupon the policeman severely informed me that the brothers of the Crown Prince were to pass that way. Would I not deign to go down into the street? It was not permitted that any one should look down upon imperial royalty from above. To the street I went, peevish, irreverent, democratically averse to princes.

Suddenly a signal from the police told that the moment had arrived. I expected one of two things. I expected to see the princes pass in regal and religious state, as befits a royalty that is looked upon as divine on this day of a great national celebration; or else I expected them, like a public man of the West on a public occasion, to go by in an automobile, acclaimed by the people and bowing acknowledgments. In either case I expected some great enthusiasm and curiosity among the people. Instead, there fell a dead silence, an almost painful constraint. A big red automobile flashed down the road; I caught a glimpse of two correct-looking young men in khaki-coloured uniforms—and it was all over. The people dared breathe again. It took fifteen minutes for them to return to full gaiety and naturalness. Thereafter the pageant meandered on through the afternoon into the night, but my cavalier returned no more, and loneliness closed in upon me with the darkness.

CHAPTER XXIII

FOOTPATHS IN THE SACRED MOUNTAINS

NEXT morning Kyoto wore such an after-the-ball-is-over look that, when an itinerating missionary hailed me, and offered to take me along, on his way to Ohara, I accepted gladly. In such jaunts with gossellers one comes nearer to the life of the common people than foreigners in general can otherwise do. Ohara is a pretty hamlet at the foot of a sacred and historic mountain, whose sturdy girls and brawny youths are especially devoted to the service of the Imperial Household. The Ohara girls are famous throughout the countryside. They are no meek, shuffling, blushing misses, like the Nesans of the city inns. They are bold, high-stepping young women who look you straight in the eye. It is a pleasure to meet them striding along a mountain road in the morning with masses of dewy lotus-blossoms on their heads. They look like nut-brown heroines of a Theocritean idyl. One knows them by their headdress, a handkerchief-like cloth tied around their heads; but one recognizes them still more by their bold, upright, sturdy bearing.

We set out in rickshaws on a morning of mists which soon turned into light rains. But as the city fell below us, and the hills and tall trees rose around us, the *kura maya* who drew me became a pitiful thing. His streaming perspiration and gasps as of one dying intruded between me and all I wished to look upon, like conscience made visible. When human frames are put to the labour

of a beast of burden, there is something pathetic in their inadequacy compared with those of almost any brutes. It was never his body that made man the lord of creation. So I left my human horse alone to carry only himself, and travelled along on my own two feet. All around us the rain was falling; hidden streams were tinkling and trickling among the leaves of the wooded hillsides; and there was the fresh, damp fragrance of rain-soaked forest-earth. The rain induced a peculiar feeling of solitude in these mountain fastnesses. In sunshine there is always something companionable.

As we drew near to Ohara, we noticed a number of animated haystacks bobbing up and down in the road. One of the haystacks rose up to greet us, revealing above a straw raincoat the brown face and cheerful smile of an Ohara girl. She said the young princes whom we had seen in Kyoto were coming to spend a few days in retirement on the mountain. In their honour the whole population of the place had turned out to clean up the road. With this announcement she returned to the other straw raincoats and continued her work. Meanwhile, a small child stood by under an orange-coloured paper umbrella. When he saw us, he burst forth into song. He was singing "Nearer, My God, to Thee." The missionary, thinking this indicated a hopeful state of mind, gave him a tract printed on pink paper, something about God, the Father. This the child eyed with hostility and suspicion. He would hold no conversation with us. When we started on, his voice behind us once more took up the hymn.

Beyond the village rose the sacred mountain of Hiesan, and as we followed a little path which promised to relieve us of an escort composed of most of the inhabitants of the village, we found ourselves ascending



How girls read and study



It was a day of mists which soon gave place to warm rain



In honour of the young princes the population had turned out to clean up the road

into its gloomy and dripping dusk. Soon the monastery buildings began to emerge, not gorgeous and gilded things like the imperial temples, but great halls that looked as if they might have grown out of the forest as naturally as trees and blossoms, for they were built wholly of forest wood which had become a lodging place for grass and mosses, and their beautiful roofs were made of shingles, fine as paper, laid one over the other in hundreds of layers, shaped and fashioned with a sweep of upcurled eaves and faintly furred with moss. The rain had caressed those roofs and the sunshine had loved them and the wind-blown seeds and creatures of the air had lingered on them and given birth to all manner of living things, till they had lost all the rigidity of man-made creations, and their substance and soul were wholly of the forest.

Now they were deserted, except for a little old man, subdued and churlish, who was making ready for the advent of the young princes. Looking upon them, I thought of the marvellous history of these mountains, of the warrior monks who had encamped here and had raided the valleys below, and of the emperors who, in the days when the Shogun, the military regent, had usurped all imperial power, had worn out their lives here in involuntary retirement as Buddhist monks, and had become holy against their will.

But mostly I thought of Benkei, whose deeds became an uproarious legend. Benkei was a fighting priest of enormous stature, who conquered a thousand knights one by one in single combat. Once he stole the bell from the temple of Mii-dera. Toiling wearily over these hills with it, he came to a Buddhist monastery. The priests offered him hospitality. His acceptance of it was a bit appalling, for he sat down forthwith and

swallowed the contents of a kettle of soup five feet in diameter. After this repast he began to feel genial. So he offered to let each priest strike the bell once. Now the bell of Mii-dera is not an object to tamper with. Like other great Buddhist bells, it is something half divine, yet subject to caprices of hate and love, and enormously self-willed. Among other things, it was, in those days, a woman-hater, but that is another story.

So now, when the first priest approached and struck it, instead of giving forth its usual deep, sweet, melancholy *boom, boom*, it spoke out boldly in a human voice, saying, "I want to go back to Mii-dera." In vain Benkei attempted to elicit a sound less disconcerting. The bell refused to say anything except, "I want to go back to Mii-dera." At last Benkei, in wrath, kicked it down hill, over the very hill that we had climbed. Rolling over stones and the coiled roots of trees, it went clanging its message to all the forest, "I want to go back to Mii-dera." And there was no peace in all the woods till the wish was fulfilled. When it was finally returned to its temple, it peaceably subsided into its former melodiousness, and never used human speech again. But it carries on its surface to this day the scratches it received in its protesting career down this mountain. Afterwards, when the companionship snatched from me at the Gion Matsuri was restored, I heard its pure, deep tones speaking into the sunset among the groves of Mii-dera, and though it hates all women, because their love is dearer to men than the peace of Buddha, its voice did not sound harshly in the ears of the girl from the West.

As we climbed the slopes so storied, our retinue fell away, leaving us to the escort of three bare-legged school boys under three paper umbrellas of blue and purple

and green. Solemnly, silently they strode along behind us, keeping step with their three pairs of wooden clogs, like soldiers. The missionary addressed compliments, jokes and sermons to them—all equally in vain. When we stopped, they stopped and squatted on their heels in a row under their three umbrellas. When we started again, they started, and their little feet went clack, clack, clack, behind us. At last we came to a waterfall on the top of the mountain, creaming and foaming in a lonely beauty among the trees. For a moment we sat on a wet rock to rest, while the missionary improved the opportunity by telling the little boys that God made the waterfall, and they should be grateful accordingly. In conclusion he gave them a text: "God is Love," and asked them if they would remember it. "*Hai,*" said they, nodding solemnly, with great round eyes. They had not another word to say. When we rose to go, they rose, tramping three by three. It was growing dark now. Suddenly out of the drip of the rain and the rattle and sigh of the forest trees, and the roar of the stream that plunged at our feet, rose the sound of shrill and rhythmical shouting, insistent as the voice of the bell of Mii-dera, hurled downward along this self-same path, and punctuated by the clack, clack, clack, of three pairs of feet. The missionary paused.

"Do you know what they are saying?" he asked, delighted. "They are saying over and over the text I gave them."

By what grace of sound or sentiment it had caught their fancy I do not know, but all the way down they shouted in chorus, announcing to the trees and shadows and Shinto ghosts of that forest place, "God is Love. God is Love."

By the time we reached the village, night had fallen.

After a bowl of rice flavoured with outrageous pickles, and lubricated with bitter green tea, the missionary said that his labours were not yet over. Would I follow him? I followed.

I did not know where I was going, but I kept on, between tall, straight trunks of trees, under dripping leaves, into the midst of that Japanese forest on that rainy night, following a paper lantern which travelled as erratically as a will-o'-the-wisp and glowed grotesquely like a pumpkin on Hallowe'en. Bye and bye we came to a gleam of light in the woods that gave a silvery beauty to the half seen trunks of trees, and twinkled in casual rain-drops. It came from a thatched house. Within we could see a platform of clean matting and a little old man and a little old woman sitting on their heels eating rice.

Why had I come? I didn't know. It was as if I had accidentally walked through a Japanese print, like Alice stepping through the looking glass, and didn't know what to do now that I was there. But I took off my shoes and sat on my feet obediently, while the little old man and little old woman bumped their heads on the matting in front of me, and offered me pale green tea, with airy cakes, on a red lacquer table. What was I doing there? Then I noticed familiar paraphernalia. Light dawned. Oh, that missionary! He had brought me to a Christian meeting.

The meeting had not yet materialized. I merely recognized the preliminary signs. But it materialized shortly in the persons of three young Japanese evangelists, studious, gentlemanly lads in crisp cotton kimonos. They opened the meeting by drinking tea. Then sitting in a semi-circle, and looking as composed as Buddha on his lotus flower, they began to sing "In the Cross

of Christ I Glory," reverently, with bowed heads. The fact that they were congregation, choir, and preacher all in one apparently did not disturb them.

The effect was magical. Outside in the fragrant, wet darkness of the forest, we heard a low scraping, then a running on wooden shoes. One by one small, impassive faces with round eyes filled up the space beyond the matting-covered platform. They kept coming, more and more—mothers with babies, schoolboys, and sniffling schoolgirls.

The evangelists kept on singing. One by one those little yellow children stepped out of their wooden shoes and climbed upon the platform. Seating themselves in rows before the evangelists, and taking up the tune, they began to sing, too. It was apparently as much fun as a Shinto festival; the boys who carried the sacred car from the Gion temple for its annual bath in the river seemed to get no more pleasure out of their religious exercises. There was a pagan freedom and mirth in those small Christians, swaying, singing, shouting, all together in the name of Jesus, and all the time more of them kept coming, and the volume of music penetrated farther and farther into the wet night.

Then into the assembly came a man shaven-headed. He had sweet and intellectual features. As he entered the room where the children were singing, he prostrated himself in prayer. Then he came over to us, and saluting many times, bowed his head to the floor. This was a Buddhist priest who had become a Christian and had come many miles to see this Christian meeting. He was a good Christian, the missionary said, but a bit of a Puritan. He believed in a strict observance of the Sabbath, which is not a popular institution in Japan. He really had a beautiful face. It was beautiful as the

faces of the old mothers of a passing generation whom we used to see reading their Bibles in the quiet of the afternoon, when the work of the day was done.

Meanwhile, at a signal from the evangelists, the children were repeating the Lord's Prayer in Japanese. Each put his two hands over his eyes, some of them closing their eyes very tight, some of them winking mischievously between their fingers. Then they bowed their heads to the floor, as in the extreme form of Japanese salutation, and repeated "Our Father" with much rhythm and energy. It seemed almost like a game to them—this praying and singing. To most, perhaps, it would never be anything more. But many influences enter into the making of a man. Perhaps there were those among them to whom some day the beautiful phrases of "Our Father," or the cadences of the hymns, would come back illumined with sudden meaning, and whose lives would be the richer for hints of other worlds of feeling, of possible standards, brought to them by men of alien customs from a far-away land.

We left them singing, and as we went forth into the rain and the woods, we came upon more than one of their parents, too shy to go to the meeting, standing under paper umbrellas among the bushes, listening with wonder and bewilderment to the religious performances of their off-spring.

CHAPTER XXIV

AN UNINVITED GUEST OF THE MIKADO

BY next morning the last Occidental guest had vanished from Kyoto, and even the missionaries were wooing the mountain winds of Karuizawa. But I lingered, alone in the imperial city, pursuing my studies and writing steadily by day, through lack of temptation to do otherwise, and dreaming, a little wistfully, among the Buddhist groves in the twilight. It was calm and pensive life, in which, for a time, I seemed wholly identified with this stream of alien mortality, and all personal hopes and desires were held, as it were, in suspension.

Yet, when evening came, it seemed lonely in the echoing rooms of the hotel, and the bareness of the dining-hall grew well-nigh intolerable. Sometimes, coming in hot and tired, I would shake out some pretty dinner gown, teasing myself with the notion that there might be a new guest at dinner, in whose eyes I might shine. But the friendliest glance that caught the sheen of my silk or the gleam of my silver slippers was my own, trying to smile back from the long mirror en route to the dining-room, and next evening I would relapse forlornly into white duck.

Then, one day, there came a letter suggesting that I should see Nara. Nara, said the letter, is the old city where Japan first attained to something like civilization under the tutelage of Buddhist sages. It was the seat of the first emperors, and is still the hiding-place

of some of the best and most ancient of Japanese Buddhist art. Nara—Nara—what obscure memories of pleasure did that word stir in my unconscious? Ah—the one gleam of companionship that had flashed across my loneliness had come out of Nara!

There is only a ride of two or three hours on a leisurely Japanese railroad train, before one steps off into the ancient and mossy peace of Nara. It is a little city, which fades away into a fabulous forest. That forest is something such as we, of the new Western World, never see, nor can even understand. Its trees are great and old as in the primeval forests of our own northwest, and the green life grows in a riot at their feet, untamed, untrimmed, as in the deepest solitude. But the mossy paths beneath those trees are storied as the streets of Rome or London, the trails of kings and priests through thirteen centuries, and the record of the footprints of a people. And among the dark and towering branches that make so rich a gloom against the sun, blaze the red courts of temples where a Shinto priestess, who is only a slender slip of a girl, with whitened face and scarlet robes, will dance to the clack, clack, clack of the priest's bamboo instruments. In another place, the Nara Buddha, a gracious, golden, benignant figure, inhabits these sylvan shadows. Yet so riotous is the tangle of the forest all about that it is only slowly that one realizes how rich a human and spiritual life has blossomed in this green fastness, nor how many gods and ghosts there are who call it home. The sweetest inhabitants are not the minions of Heaven, nor yet of the Tenno, but the wild deer. From every thicket their great dark eyes look forth, and if you move gently among the leaves, they will even come forth and nose your hand softly, or skip, girl-like, in friendliness behind you



A small boy, under an orange-coloured umbrella, began to sing,
"Nearer, my God, to Thee"



Small, impassive faces filled up the space beyond the platform



I stepped off into the ancient and mossy peace of Nara



The sweetest inhabitants of Nara are the wild deer

on the path. In this forest there is also a great bell, whose slow, harmonious boom, boom, is the richest of all mortal sounds, and when, among the lofty cool trees, it strikes upon your ear, it seems like the beating of the heart of this old, mysterious world.

If there were any footsteps that I half expected to meet along those mossy paths, or a human voice to break the ghostly music of the bell, I was disappointed. The hotel was empty, though gossip of an American I recognized clung about the place. It seems that Prince Arthur of Connaught had come there shortly before, travelling as a simple gentleman, with another simple gentleman who was an earl. But the Japanese were determined that he should abate none of his princeliness, and kept him to place and ceremony against his will. One morning, when the prince issued from the hotel, there were the rickshaw men, bowed down with their heads in the dust, and the rest of the Japanese neighbourhood frozen to reverence, while below stood a little policeman in white, stationed to see that no common foot should contaminate the path that the prince was shortly to make holy. At the same time a young American, walking across the lawn from the hotel where he and the prince were fellow guests, stepped all unwitting upon the consecrated dirt. "Stop," ejaculated the policeman, producing his one word of English under the stimulus of this terrible crisis. The American stopped. But what was he to do next? There was the prince in his rickshaw, and there was he, two Caucasians on a Japanese landscape with the etiquette of the English-speaking peoples, in these matters, to uphold between them. But American education includes no training for such encounters. To the little Japanese policeman the matter was easy: a prince and a commoner—*down on your knees, Sir!*

But suppose the prince had a sense of humour, and he was looking quite as if he did. At this point the American settled the matter by standing courteously by, as one gentleman in the presence of another, and bowing and lifting his hat. Whereupon the prince, exchanging a friendly and quite appreciative smile with his American cousin, bowed, too, and lifted his hat. But the eye of a Japanese coolie gleamed astonished from the dust: "Was this American, too, a prince?" Remembering in what chill and awful state the young Japanese princes had passed at Kyoto, I found this tale of informal royalty amusing.

After two days in Nara I returned to Kyoto with a world of beauty to remember, and tongue and mind alike restless for human converse. On the night of my arrival I once more tempted Providence with a display of dinner dress. And this time the charm worked; for I had scarcely finished my lone and stately repast in the big dining-hall when the card of a caller came to me. I looked at the name on the card. "So God," I thought, "is good to me, after all!"

Sydney (for I will now call him by his proper name, since I can think of no fictitious substitute which slips more pleasantly from the tongue, and is richer in manly and knightly associations), Sydney had come to Kyoto about the time I had gone to Nara, impelled by vague impulses which he later elucidated, and had been walking in my abandoned footsteps, while I had been tracing his. Even as he explained all this, my mind was plunging into projects of joint sight-seeing. And, with that, I remembered the documents from the Imperial Household, which I had thus far neglected because of the dullness of venturing on such a call, alone and not linguistically aided.

"Do you think," I asked, "that you can pass yourself off as a Bishop?"

It seemed rather hopeless. He looked fatally young, and there was something secular about the curl of his hair. Moreover, he hesitated to involve either the Bishop or me in trouble by using the Bishop's passes.

"You know these people are fanatics on the subject of their emperor," he said. "They won't allow his sacred countenance to appear on stamps or postal cards, the way the British use the phiz of old King George, nor is it permitted to display for sale anything bearing the imperial crest. There are all sorts of quaint instances of suicides among menials who have accidentally broken some of the taboos that hedge the Imperial Person. You don't want to commit suicide, do you, as a reparation for misusing the imperial pass? If you will wait, I will get one of these things for myself."

Remembering how long we had waited for these passes, I thought I should be gone from Kyoto by the time his arrived. At last he suggested an alternative. We would go to the palace, and I would present the whole bunch passes, which called for the admission of the Bishop, the Bishop's wife and daughter, and myself. At the same time, he would enter with me, presenting no pass, and register by his proper name, and simply trust to his wits to prevent the guards from noticing the irregularity. If they chose to think that my passes applied to him, that was their affair. There would be nothing that could be laid either to the Bishop or me, and the onus would be on the Japanese guards for not taking advantage of his honesty.

Next afternoon we rode to the gates of one of the four palaces to which my permits admitted me, through the pleasant imperial parks where the Ohara girls were

piling the new mown grass. We were admitted by polite guards in badly fitting Occidental uniforms and ushered into a little parlour furnished like the ante-room to a dentist's office. Here we were invited to register, while the passes I tendered were carefully scrutinized. Sydney, the guards accepted as the Bishop without question, not requiring the prevarication which his truthful soul was not prepared to stoop to. But they could not determine whether I was the Bishop's wife or his daughter, and on this point I was very candid, glad to practise honesty somewhere. Meanwhile I registered, and Sydney adroitly placed his own proper name beneath mine, and then, with his hand still on the book, poured forth a flood of eloquence in Japanese. For such a treat the guards were evidently not prepared. From their struggle with English they fell back on their own language with relief, talking politely all at once, and, no doubt, enjoying all his solecisms. While social intercourse was so blithely proceeding, Sydney closed the book and escorted them out, without leaving any opportunity to compare the passes and the registration.

It was with some fear and trepidation that we proceeded around the lawns, expecting every moment that some officious pair of feet would come scampering after and hale us to justice. The palace grounds which we had thus guilefully entered formed a pleasant lawny estate, with interspersed groves and water, much like a college campus.

There was not the sombre magnificence of the Buddhist groves and crimson courts, nor any sense of old historic splendour. Before the Restoration of the Emperor to full power in 1868, he was forced by the conditions of the usurping shogunate to live frugally and without ostentation, and since his rise to a supreme and unique

position, neither the tastes and artistic capacity of the people nor the resources of the land permit of the massive building and ornate decoration of the grand imperialisms of China or Northern India. But the imperial estates were charming none the less, fresh, and pretty, and green, and the buildings, with their beautiful, many-shingled roofs, and stretches of clean matting, and paper doors, were, in the Japanese way, pleasantly simple and homelike. And while one could not suppress a slight disappointment that this palace of the emperor seemed scarcely more than any well-to-do gentleman might afford, at the same time there was something not displeasing to a democratic soul in all this simpleness—even though Sydney assured me that it was not democracy that dictated it. Only the big hall where the emperor is crowned, with its vistas of great, red lacquered pillars, and fine fresco representing the Chinese sages who brought learning and culture to Japan, had something of dignity about it.

Sydney, meanwhile, was still practising his eloquence on the Japanese guides who had come with us, nor did he let them escape, till we were safely outside the imperial portals. There remained three palaces yet to visit. We tried one more, and the scheme still worked. Then our courage failed, and we determined to tamper no more with the Mikado's hospitality. Yet withal, we had been well-meaning and grateful guests, not really unmindful of the imperial courtesy; and I take this opportunity of recording my apology and thanks for a pleasant day.

There is nothing that breaks down all barriers between youth like being partners in mischief, and joint enterprises of every sort thereafter flourished between us. Of the full story of the next two weeks there is no

need to write. The interpretation of the Japan we saw is already in Sydney's book, and my observations must yield to his profounder knowledge. As for the rest, there are few who cannot fashion the story themselves, if not out of memory, at least out of hope. But in one respect our experience was public and unique and deserves a chronicler, if only to warn the unwary: that was in the universal chaperonage of Japanese maidenhood. Fabulous tales have gone abroad among Japanese girls of the ways of the white man in the presence of a lady, and there is not one of them below the ranks in which breeding suppresses curiosity who would miss a good chance of observation. For in Japan the social attitudes of the sexes are reversed. It is the woman who carries all burdens, who yields precedence to the man in passing through a door, who performs for her lord all the little personal services which a gentleman, in our country, performs for a lady.

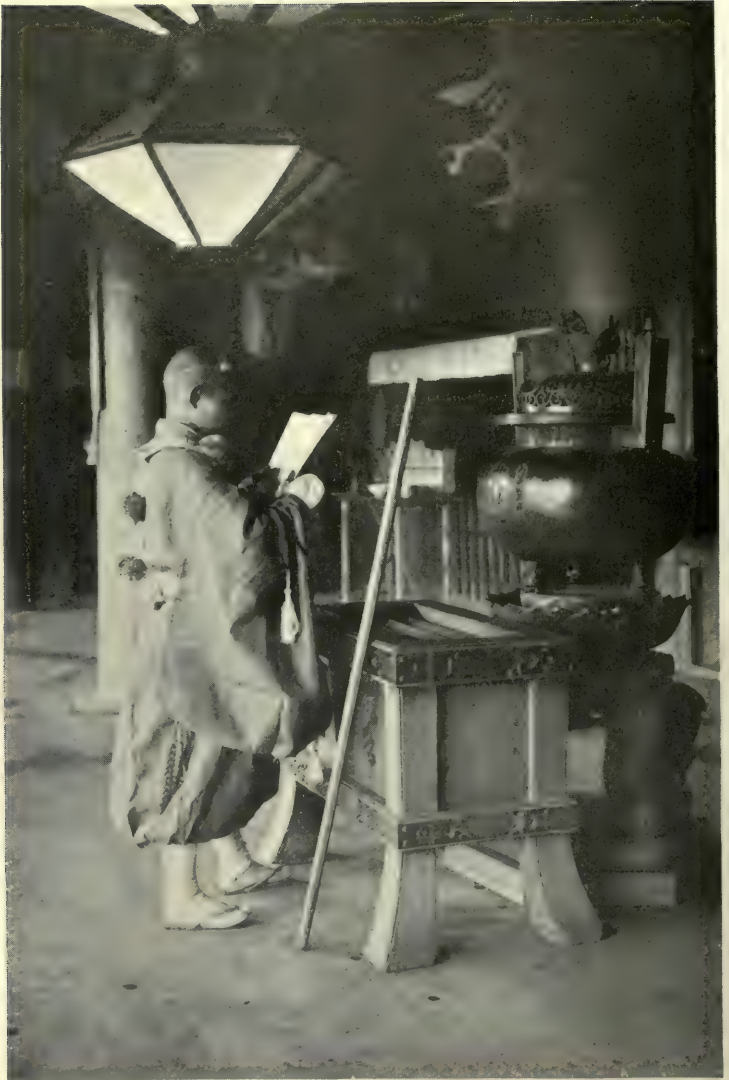
In his constant and instinctive practice of all the courtesies that the western gentleman yields to a lady, Sydney is notable even among well-bred Americans, and it was not long before his manners were a myth among the maidens. When we went forth for a picnic, Sydney laden and I free-handed despite my protests, there were the giggling Nesans of the hotel drawn up to watch this unnatural procession. Once, in the courtyard of a native inn, where we stopped for rice, tea, and a vile pickle of fish, Sydney stepped aside to let me enter the door first. Forthwith there was a faint ripple of mirth, which grew and swelled from peep-hole to peep-hole and balcony to balcony, till all the place was gay with the mockery, and even the proprietor himself came out to laugh. Sometimes a girl would seem to think that she also should share in this mad benevolence of foreign men to her



Beneath the towering branches that make so rich a gloom
against the sun, blazes the scarlet temple where a
Shinto priestess will dance



Many gods and ghosts there are who call this home



There was not the sombre magnificence of the
Buddhist interiors

unworthy sex. As we walked along the temple path, two or three would clatter up on their clogs behind us, laughing, and teasing, and inviting some notice on their own account. And there was one sniffing Nesan who established herself next to us at lunch in a Japanese inn, giggling and blushing, and could be dislodged neither by hint nor persuasion.

Nor were the Japanese girls the only enthusiasts in this research. The young Buddhist monks were smiling pupils when some more saintly elder was not by, and the vendors of sweetmeats were quick to translate rumour into profit. There was scarcely a woodland solitude in which we did not find a little house made ready, it seemed, for our sole coming, and tea and cakes prepared by some officious restaurateur. This repast he would spread before *me*, having heard the rumour and learned the trick. "Tea for Ochsan," he would announce to Sydney. And Sydney, taking advantage of the happy suggestion, would translate: "He says this is tea for *my wife*."

Into the midst of those happy days darted a telegram from the Bishop. I had been quite neglecting my usual communications to Dorothy, and he had grown anxious in consequence. Would I join him at once at Karuizawa? I left that same night with my plans for the future as yet unaltered. The next evening, after some delay in Tokyo, I reached the top of the mountain at Karuizawa, and was put through the third degree by Dorothy, eager, curious, and romantically suspicious. Next day was my birthday. In honour of the day the kind Bishop and Lady gave me a dinner in the little dwelling in the woods where they were staying. It was a simple building, a compromise between an American bungalow and a Japanese house, with the sliding wooden windows of

the native structures which serve as a protection against typhoons. While the leaf-checked sunlight was flickering, undarkened, across our dinner table, the Bishop suddenly averred that he felt a typhoon in the air, and the wooden shutters must be drawn. I protested the innocence of the pure sunlight without. But he persisted, and, rising from the table, himself drew most of the sliding windows to till we were shut in darkness.

Suddenly there was a flash and shine, and "Cooksan," the chef, appeared, bearing an enormous birthday cake, as gay with lights as the Milky Way. The reason for the anxiety to darken our assemblage was now obvious. Presenting the cake, the Bishop made a speech in which he congratulated the bride, and then corrected himself, and said he had forgot—it was only a birthday; and was apologetic, and wondered, with twinkling eyes, how he could make such a mistake. Then I was required, with much solemnity and ceremony, to put my knife into the foamy white structure, and make a secret wish. I did so, and the wish, after many months and some tribulations, was granted.

But it was not all pure merriment, that sojourn on Karuizawa. The fourth of August which was my birthday was also the anniversary of the entrance of Great Britian into the war, and the critical period of the German offensive. The day came as a reminder of great and solemn issues. My youth, like that of most young people who had come to maturity at that time, was pretty well shaped to that war. My recreations and my work had both been of its texture, and there was scarcely an incipient courtship across which its shadow had not come. Now it stood squarely and darkly across every hope and purpose.

Into the tangle of melancholy and puzzled thinking

came a letter from Sydney. Would I see him in Tokyo, when I came down from Karuizawa? Would I be willing to join him on the ascent of Fujiyama, if he arranged it? I telegraphed, "Yes." In Tokyo I found, not Sydney, as yet, but another letter.

It was from the Diplomat. He had come to Tokyo; he had dined there on August 1. But alas for the perfidy of the feminine heart—where was I? Had I not promised? And the rest of the note was all about his despair and his journey to England, on which he was now, no doubt, safely launched by way of the Pacific, with a multitude of ladies all about him to adore. Thus he makes his exit from my story.

With the evening came Sydney, and almost at the same moment an occurrence which swept away all private thought for a time. In his hand he still clutched the newspapers in which he had been trying to decipher the truth beneath cryptic notices of uprisings all over the empire—in Kobe, in Kyoto, in Osaka—among the poor because the price of rice was so high. At dinner his talk still circled around the subject.

Suddenly, out of the low hum of the hotel dining-hall, rose a scream: "It is a revolution—ah, yes. So it began in Petrograd! *Mon dieu! Mon dieu!* Wars, wars! Revolutions! As in Russia, so in Japan."

A fugitive Russian countess had fallen from her chair at dinner, fainting. Outside there were waves upon waves of shouting. Then a sharp, musical crash as a missile went through one of our own windows and the broken bits in falling tinkled against stones.

We went to the door. The hotel boys threw themselves in our way. "Mustn't go. Not safe. Bad people there." The Russians corroborated. Our hotel, they hysterically proclaimed, would be rushed and we should

all be murdered before morning by the starving proletariat. Walking all over our protesting hotel-boys, we stepped out into the garden.

Around the garden were the bars of an iron fence. Beyond the fence we looked into a passionate sea of faces, strangely environed and guarded by ghostly white figures bearing paper lanterns. It was like a scene of sinister enchantment. They could not seem men of like passions with ourselves—those myriads of kimonoed figures in the dimness, swaying with a restless clank and scrape of wooden shoes. They had appeared like a skeleton from the family closet, from that underworld that lies beneath the daintiness of Japan like mud beneath a lotus-pond. And there they stood—old men and little girls and frowsy women of the *eta*—helpless in a passion of dumb protest. And all about, like instruments of sorcery, floated paper lanterns, adorned with dragons and iris-flowers and fairy-tale heroes. Delicately those lanterns poised above them and shed a theatrical glow on myriads of eyes that burned like points of fire in the darkness.

Then we saw what was really happening. The ghosts to whom the lanterns belonged were the police, in their summer garb of white. The people were attempting to coalesce and form for concerted action; and the police were trying to see that they did not.

It was a voiceless crowd; there was an ominous hush, broken only by a snarl of rage as the police walked through each circling eddy of people. Silently the crowd shifted like a troubled sea. Silently the police shifted—resolute, disintegrating little bundles of energy, ghostlike in their white garments, their lanterns glowing like dull eyes in the dark.

The mob was under control. Yet one wondered,

"What if it were not!" So they stayed for hours in a kind of armed truce—the people silent, sullen, inexplicable centres of suppressed passion, shifting, heaving; and inter-penetrating them, binding them, the still force of those paper lanterns.

Sometimes there were moments of rashness. Automobiles whirled by full of policemen—an army of automobiles—and the fury of the crowd broke in shrill shouting. But there was fear even in that shout, and a premonition of failure, which caused it to die helplessly away in silence. So it lasted far into the night—the crowd, the truce, the glamour of enchaining lanterns.

Next morning the papers merely announced that a riot in front of the Imperial Hotel in Tokyo had been suppressed.

CHAPTER XXV

PILGRIMS AMONG THE STARS

OUT of a world so troubled we escaped into the peace of Fujiyama. Between us still trembled a question unanswered. Those who bear about in their most secret minds the picture of some one place—a fireside, perhaps, or sands by a moonlit sea, or some humble and common spot that borrowed once a grace from love—must read their own memories into the tale of this, our pilgrimage among the stars.

We had determined to climb Fujiyama by night. It had been Sydney's most cherished plan, the climax of the chivalrous quest of the summer. Such journeys are not made without escort and chaperonage, but why speak of that? For us there were only two upon that path to the sky, and the night and the clouds made their own privacy. Leaving the plains as the sun drew near to the foot of the mountain, we clambered upward over the slopes into the sunset. And before night had come upon us the trees had already begun to fall away below us, and the cool mists enwrapped us softly. Before us stretched a world of ashes, memorials of volcanic passion long spent, desolate, silent, with the silence of dead places. Infinitely soothing was the great emptiness, the coolness, the soundlessness. There was only the sound of our coolie's feet, a very little sound, crushing into the ash. We could not see the sky, for the cold mists came down and veiled it; nor the world below, for

the cold mists rose and wrapped it from our eyes. It was like the limbo of lost spirits, whom earth, and heaven, and hell have all refused, and they hang forever between the upper and nether spaces.

So we climbed Fuji in the twilight. The mist seemed to blush a little around us, and we saw dimly some far-off streak of pink sky. This we knew was sunset. Up and up we went, putting cloud after cloud beneath us. They fell away and drifted below over the hidden world. Sometimes the figures of Japanese pilgrims loomed through the mist, great and ghostly, and their voices came to us, disembodied and vagrant voices, sounding a little hollow in that lonely place.

Then suddenly the mountain sprang up like a wall, sheer and black into a silvery green sky; and the moon rode forth. Far below the clouds billowed like a sea, gleaming and flashing. Above there was only the infinite clarity of pure space, cloudless, star-filled; around us a wilderness of ash. We were alone in the presence of the night that is above the lower sky.

We climbed through the darkness. Above us gleamed the chain of rest-stations. Feeble, little red stars of light, they were set like rubies on the forehead of the mountain. Far below we could hear singing. It was the voices of Japanese soldiers climbing all together and singing through the night. Sometimes a friendly greeting came to us out of the distance; sometimes a white-robed pilgrim crossed our path like a ghost.

As we climbed the air grew sharper, and sometimes, in a hollow place, the cold wind from the heights rushed down upon us, roaring. I was weary and lay down upon the ashy side of the mountain. It was very soft and still warm with the heat of the sun. As I lay there above the world, looking into the vast sky, it

seemed as if I could almost feel the earth whirling through space, with a faint singing sound.

As the moon waned, the shadowy wall of the mountain grew black and terrible. At last the moonshine vanished in a pale gleam beyond the hill, and on those heights above the clouds, in that desert of ash, the darkness fell round us solemnly. In the darkness the wind seemed to rise, howling and whistling and darting upon us out of fathomless space.

We came to a rest-station built solidly of great rocks against the hill. On these heights no frailer stuff could resist the wind. Wearily we stumbled in. It was full of a warm smoky glow of light. All round men wrapped in blankets were sleeping. A little Japanese squatting over a bowl of coals made us tea. Our guide fell at our feet and snored. Outside the wind howled and snarled. It was warm, cosy; and there was comfort in the nearness of the warm, breathing, human flesh even of these unknown sleepers. So we rested.

I awoke in the first light of morning, to find Sydney already heralding the dawn. Detaching ourselves by signs and whispers from the still drowsy shelter, we slipped out together into the heart of the glowing heavens. As we stepped upon the rocky, wind-beaten ledge, the great world seemed to open beneath us, like Dante's own rose of Paradise. Above, the sky was shining; below, the mists rolled away in billows and promontories and peaks of snow, a crystalline, ephemeral world, changing, moving, smoke-grey and pearly white. Sometimes the clouds broke a little, and showed glimpses of fields and hills, like things seen at the bottom of a lake, indistinctly, through a shimmer of water. Suddenly the mists billowed like the waves of the ocean into crests of flame, and the sun rose. Beyond the mists



Fabulous tales of the ways of the white man in the presence
of a lady had gone abroad



There was not one who would miss a good chance
for observation



Fujiyama reflected in Lake Hakone

was a smooth clear sheet of light, whereon the clouds rested like islands. It was the sea! And out of that high and lonely dawn that blazes every morning beyond the lower clouds for no eyes to see, there stole into our two hearts the music and words of a poem which I had learned in childhood, and from whose melody I had never till then extracted a meaning:

The Sabbaths of eternity,
One Sabbath deep and wide—
A light upon the shining sea,
The bridegroom with his bride.

Behind us rose the cone of Fugi unconquered still, and before that second ascent, our creature appetites asserted themselves through the ecstasy of the morning, and cried out against hunger and lameness and the endless struggle for breath. In the morning light the mountain looked garish and ugly. The truthful sun, less kindly than the darkness, shone pitilessly on cinders and ash, and the scars of ancient fire. The pilgrims whose presence in the night upon the empty slopes of the mountain had seemed only some visionary companionship upon the further shores of space had now become bands of riotous Japanese pilgrims no more poetic than the crowds of Coney Island. All the several lines of them, so widely scattered at the base, were now converging upon the summit. For the top of Fujiyama is a famous Shinto shrine, the peculiar and favourite seat of that sacred spirit of this land which is believed to be the inner life of its natural phenomena, and the soul of the people, and to be incarnate on earth in the Emperor. A simple belief and very near to the primitive—innocent enough to all seeming, and not unim-

pressive; yet capable of the same jingoistic uses that made the aspirations of *Kultur* anathema. However this may be, the pious Japanese adds merit to his account in the other world by homage upon these heights, and enjoys the excursion and the picnic of it as his earthly reward. All over the heights the pilgrims were now clambering. Some, their devotions ended, like boys on a toboggan slide, were shooting down the slopes of ash.

All morning we climbed. The sun was hot and the air was cold, and there was nothing at all to breathe. The cinders moved under our feet and sometimes rolled clinking down the mountain.

At noon we came to the top, over the last rock. There lay the crater before us like an enlarged dump-hole. There was a little discoloured snow in it, not worth the seeing. There was a torii and a little shrine. Was this all? Had we come for this? We looked below. Fairyland was behind us! Beautiful as a dream the world glimmered through the clouds—green slopes of hills and shining sea; and over it all, like the moving face of waters, the glory of sun and cloud, shifting, flashing, vast and delicate. It seemed but an illusion, that world—hard to believe in—a vision of fleeting grace, a light that would go out in darkness.

Sitting on a black rock in the midst of the infinite heaven, throned like a god above the world, I proceeded to philosophize.

But Sydney interrupted. He had been rummaging in the little rest-house and had unearthed—a can of pineapple! It reminded our parched lips of blessings that are not found above the clouds. Our thoughts turned earthward.

All afternoon we sought the reality beneath the deli-

cate and glittering illusion of the world that shimmered below us. Sliding at break-neck pace down that wall of ash, we dropped once more into the clouds.

As we came down into a land of solid things—trees and houses and lumbering Japanese horses—a cold mist came up from the sea and wrapped us about, sprinkling our hair and faces with drops of dew. Its touch was sweet upon our weary flesh. Aching, sun-burned, and tired, yet joyfully perched on the pyramidical backs of two melancholy steeds, singing old love songs together, we rode in the grey ghostly twilight through the green woodland lanes. After the desolation of ash and the empty heights above the world, the presence of green leaves, the fragrance of growing things, and the trickle of unseen waters were sweet, and the mist and the faint tree shadows fell on us like a caress.

Thereafter, for days, all green and simple things shone with a radiance of freshness. It was as if we had never seen the world before. Our sight was purged and we saw with eyes of men new-born.

CHAPTER XXVI

A PERSONAL EPILOGUE

It seems an imposition to bother any reader with the personal and private details of an experience whose only claim upon another's mind lies in such elements of it as are poetic and universal. Yet it seems that I can scarcely get on with my story without some further explanation.

"Dear Mother," I wrote the morning after our return from Fujiyama, enclosing a snap-shot, "I hope you like him, for he is to be my husband."

A blithe promise, indeed, but greatly weighted and shadowed in the prospects of its fulfilment! For Sydney could not leave Japan till the following June, and my presence was imperatively required at home in the autumn to undertake responsibilities I thought I could place on no one else. Moreover it seemed certain that, before June, Sydney must be swept into the struggle, perhaps by way of Siberia. And how, beyond that welter of blood which still seemed boundless and eternal, were we to find each other again, and a wholly private peace?

Still, if I could put off a little the day of my return, it might be that Sydney would be called to the front sooner than he thought and would come back with me. It might be—but when my reflections reached this point, there arrived a letter from Dorothy announcing that the Bishop was called to Sechuen province in Western China, which meant a month's journey by house-boat up

the Yangtse gorges. They could not sail till November. What would I do? Could I wait? Could I come? I wrote her of my ultimate intentions and received a letter by return mail, all underscored, announcing that, on the receipt of *The News*, she had "wept quarts," and was ever so glad, and would like to hug me to pieces, and meanwhile she enclosed a note to Sydney which I might read if I was going to be "that sort of wife." Of course I delivered it, without reading, but was favoured with a peep at it afterwards. It was a warm-hearted and loving letter for "dear Sydneysan," containing a complete record of my virtues.

Though I had no intention of detaching myself from my duties at home which were much on my conscience, I finally wrote for advice and full information, asking for a reply by cable to Manila, all private cable connections between Japan and America being at that time impossible. The next thing to do was to start off in the direction of Manila to get that swift answer. It was to be a brief excursion, for practical purposes only, and I said good-bye to Sydney cheerfully, like one off for a week-end, with promises to straighten out my affairs according to his wishes with the blessed help of the American cable, and to return, if not to a wedding, at least with a definite promise.

So one silvery midnight I slipped out of Kobe, over the fiery little waves of a moonlit sea. Behind me Sydney's white tropical garb, and the little boat in which he had come out to the ship to say good-bye, melted like spiritual essences into the snowy radiance of the night. How often, in the months that followed, when all the seas of the world tossed between me and my hopes, and every day tangled and snarled anew the slender thread that bound me to those silvered shores—how often I

pictured it again, the sea, and the sky gay with stars, and the little boat and the white form therein, and all the hopeful parting in the moonlight, and the plans and pledges that time turned to irony.

BOOK FOUR

CHAPTER XXVII

PERCY, THE PLUTOCRAT

I DID not try to make friends on board, having myself too much to plan and to remember. It was enough to sit by the hour, alone and idle, with the tropical sea swinging quietly beneath me. Smooth and blue and languid was that sea, shining like silk beneath the shining sky, a mirror for dreams and a canvas for fancy. Great clouds touched with grey and amber slept upon the horizon, and the water heaved idly, and the boat moved like a lazy thing, as if it could scarcely lift itself through the weight of water.

The passengers were, as usual, pretty well divided between the missionaries and the poker players. Here and there a single individual lounged lonesomely about, seeking distraction that would steer a safe course between the sheep and the goats. One of these was the Younger Son. He was a lanky, pleasant, futile sort of Englishman, who lived on a remittance from home and spent his days trying to devise means of enlarging it without losing caste.

His name I recognized at once, for I had known his wife in Japan. So when he came along and detached me from a band of missionaries, whispering, "Come with me. You look like the devil among the angels," I hailed him as a friend; for he was, in his idle way, a good sort, well read, well bred, and entertaining.

His chief function in the plot of my story is that he

introduced Percy, the Plutocrat. Percy had a luxurious suite on board and was fabled to be enormously rich. He was a slim, blonde Englishman, with keen grey eyes and a manner alternately bored and intense. He spent his day before the shelves of books in the writing-room. Beginning at the top shelf, he was reading to the bottom at the rate of about ten books a day. Once or twice he separated himself from these literary pursuits long enough to join the Younger Son and me in a promenade around the deck, on which occasions he said nothing. Now and then he would deposit himself in a steamer-chair next to mine, and watch me with eyes in which keenness gave away to brooding. But to all my efforts to be sociable he remained immune.

"All is not gold that glitters," I remarked to the Younger Son. "But I must say that his gold is the only brilliant thing about your friend the Plutocrat."

"Oh, you don't understand him yet," he answered. "He's got something on his mind—a girl, I fancy. He is really a remarkable chap, quite amazing."

At this point the Plutocrat joined us and took the chair on the other side of me. He and the Younger Son began a discussion of the love-story in a novel they were reading, talking back and forth across me. The Younger Son was inclined to put on airs. On such occasions he always wore that look of profound and secret wisdom which matrimony seems to confer on some people.

"Take my word for it, old chap," said he. "A bachelor never understands these things. Wait till you're married."

"Married!" The word seemed to galvanize Percy into life. He jumped up and began to pace back and forth. "Married—what do you mean by married?"

"Oh, come now, Percy. Marriage is marriage," said

the Younger Son, laughing a little as if to ward off a scene.

"And do you really think you know what marriage is—what heaven and hell and utter torture it can be under our British system of caste and society?"

His words were coming now in a passionate torrent. "Suppose you have a lot—money, position, and all that, and ambition. You've got to marry up to it, especially if you have political aspirations. And all the while there's a girl. She hasn't any money, isn't anybody, you know—quite out of your set or class or whatever you call it. She lives in shabby little rooms of her own. You don't know how it happened, but that place is home to you. It's not passion—understand! There was passion once, but it's all burnt out, and in its place has come kindness and a habit deep as life. Your life is no longer your own. You think, you feel, you act, in terms of her. When you think, you are only holding mental conversations with her. When you feel, you see your heart reflected in her face. Another personality lives in your blood, moves in your soul. She's getting old and thin; all the prettiness you cared about once is worn out. But you don't care. She's the book in which the history of your youth is written—the hopes, the rapture, the passion; all its misery, repentance, and failure. She knows everything about you and understands. You know if you came to her door penniless, disgraced, or drunk—she'd take you in. She is the only person in the world before whom you could break down and weep and not be ashamed.

"Then the time comes when you say to yourself: 'I must get married. I must stand for Parliament. I must found a family and leave my fortune to a son.' And you look around for what the world calls a wife. You give

her up. And it is like slow suicide, a daily rending of your whole self, fibre from fibre, nerve from nerve, flesh from flesh. You walk the streets to keep from going to her. You read book after book to keep—”

He stopped suddenly and ended coldly: “There may not be priest or bell or book there, but I tell you *that* is marriage.” Dead silence fell. The Younger Son looked embarrassed. Percy walked back and forth. Fearing lest he should be regretting his outburst, I spoke of the book in his hand, and the conversation gradually slipped into more ordinary channels. But it remained a dialogue between the two men. When I rose to say good-night, I said: “I am afraid I have contributed little to the conversation to-night.”

Percy looked at me gravely. “I have been talking to you all evening,” he said.

After that a strange friendship sprang up between us, at once formal and intimate. I first saw Manila over the walls his wealth built around me, before I graduated from the plutocracy into the society of the pygmies, and the most primitive life I knew in all my wanderings.

A day or two later we came into Manila. All morning we had been gliding through warm rains along the shores of lonely and verdant islands. About two o'clock we came to anchor in that beautiful harbour over which America still claims a protectorate. Through a sheet of rain I looked forth on those low green shores with a warm sense of homecoming. A street-car grinding busily away into the wet shadow of palms, the dome of an old Spanish church, a blur and blot of rain—that was Manila. Around us on the rain-beaten waters lay schooners and gunboats, and through the mist the red bars of the American flag gleamed softly.

The boat had come alongside the pier, and out of the

babel of voices rose accents long since grown strange to me, but potent to stir old memories of home. The American accent! I knew now what the British meant by that phrase. It was strange to hear one's own language almost as a foreign tongue; for in the Orient even Americans quickly fall into the British way of talking, and only the Philippines maintain our speech in its native purity. But all around me now were American faces—real Americans who had come directly to the islands on American transports years ago and were as blissfully ignorant of the social and linguistic usages of peoples not ruled by Uncle Sam as they might have been in their own little towns back home. Their nasal, humorous, unpolished speech was deliciously reminiscent of Ohio and Indiana. The old dock-hand looked like a ferry-man on the Hudson; and the man with the Filipino passport-agent talked like the keeper of a general store in a small Connecticut village. After my sojourn among the British, the manners of these Americans struck me as just a little rude, yet immensely kind and homelike.

The whole afternoon was consumed in the vexations of landing. As I waited for my share of the attentions of the passport-agent, I wondered where Percy was, and whether I should ever see him again. He was going on to Hongkong, I knew. He himself interrupted this reverie.

"What can I do for you?" he asked. "The ship is in harbour for several days, and I have rooms at the Manila Hotel."

"I have a room there, too," I replied, "—at least, until I receive an offer of other hospitality."

He looked thoughtful, and walked away with an air of self-absorption. Later he returned.

"I have a motor-car outside," he said. "It will take

you up to the hotel as soon as you can extricate yourself here."

"Are you coming?" I asked.

"No, I have decided to stay on shipboard."

I suppose I looked surprised. He went on: "I'd like to see a bit of you while I am here, dining and motoring and all that. I thought, since you are alone, you might feel it embarrassing to be seen with me if I were staying at the hotel too. And I suppose you'd rather not arrive with me, either. So go along in the motor-car, and I'll find my way around there and dine with you if I may."

It was the kind of delicacy that one could expect only from a sophisticated person. But I appreciated the fact that, in his own self-conscious fashion, he was playing the part of a gentleman.

After dinner at the hotel we found the Younger Son and a dowager, and went out to see Manila at night. As we sped along through the damp and fragrant darkness, the city seemed to me a little like New Orleans, with its old Spanish houses, its palms and mossy walls and tangled gardens. We saw it all by flashes and circles of light, each separate picture framed in the illumination of the street lamps. Sometimes the pillars and closed shutters of a Spanish house, sometimes the walls of a cathedral, fortresslike save for the stone hands of Jesus reaching out to us from the darkness; then a quick lunch counter; a department store; a khaki-clad figure; and again a Señorita's brown head framed in gauze. So they passed.

But the chauffeur had been tipped, as chauffeurs in those foreign ports are likely to be. The gentlemen were not to be allowed to take the ladies back to the hotel without leaving some one the richer. The car stopped before a pavilion glowing with lights like the starry

heavens and throbbing with music. Would we dance? Surely the ladies wished to dance!

"That all depends," said Percy cautiously. "Let us look at the dance."

The chauffeur assured us that it was most respectable. The most delicate-minded ladies frequented this wonderful place. In fact, only the élite of Manila society ventured to come here. His manner implied that his exhortations were a social honour which we could not ignore.

We were helped out by a round little fellow in brown and scarlet livery, with a cap set at a humorous angle above his grin. The dancing pavilion was divided into two parts—the white side and the brown side. These were separated by a wall of odd-looking horticulture in the shape of palms budding and blossoming with artificial cherry blossoms. The white side was a harmless-looking cabaret. The brown side was more mysterious. On one side under a gallery sat white men drinking at little tables. On the opposite side sat demure little Filipino maidens in rows, dressed in cheap, girlish evening frocks, like schoolgirls at a country party.

The music squeaked, wailed, and burst into tune and form. At once the white men at the table sprang up. Each advanced to some little brown maiden and the dancing began. The girls were very slim, with dainty waists and trim ankles. They walked and danced with a curious swagger, not voluptuous exactly, yet not lacking in hints of savage abandon. It was not revolting, like the dancing of one or two soft, painted, white women who strayed into the "respectable" side of the cabaret. The movement of those lithe brown creatures had the grace and naturalness of wild animals, with a swing of the hips and a twist of the waist whose sensual art

the Western girl has lost. Yet certainly it was not moral dancing. There was something shameless and exciting about it.

The little dancers had shy and childlike ways. There was no familiarity, almost no flirting. They glanced only now and then at their partners, furtively, bashfully. When the dance was over, each man left twenty centavos or more in his partner's hand. Of this the girls deposited ten centavos at the cash-window. Beyond ten centavos for each dance the spoils were theirs. Then they scurried back to their places, awaiting with down-cast eyes and folded hands the invitation of the next man.

Afterwards I learned that there are several places of this sort in Manila, of a somewhat indeterminate moral character. This one, the most gorgeous of them all, was later closed, I believe, through the efforts of the Y. M. C. A. and of white women who said that girls had been lured to dance there, in its respectable area, under false pretences.

Next day Percy said that he was really going to show me Manila. To this end he dismissed my galesa—a leisurely Filipino carriage drawn by somnambulant beasts—and whirled me off in a motor-car. All afternoon we careered along the edge of the speed limit, among great water-buffalo whose spreading horns blocked all passage, through narrow streets, beneath stone saints whose garments had become gardens for the wind-blown seeds of flowers, past an old graveyard, dank and heavily green, where bones of men long dead were hid away in crypts one above another, and were now sewed and sealed with the tendrils of moss—after which he deposited me at the hotel with an air of satisfaction. He had now shown me the town, and a fine confusion it was in my mind.

The only outstanding moments in this rapid demonstration were those in which we tiptoed into the ward of a mission hospital for women and children. Why he chose to include this in the sight-seeing I do not know. He merely remarked: "I suppose I shall die some day, and compound for my sins by leaving money to one of these things."

The children were a spectacle to extract gold from a miser. Most of them were simply suffering from starvation as a result of their parents' ignorance of the kind of food necessary for little tots. There they lay, helpless little quivering lumps of brown flesh on little white beds in rows. Our path was lined with the sombre eyes of these mites, set in hollows of their thin faces, almost like fires in skulls. For me they assumed an ethnological interest, for the variety of race and feature there was typical of the fusion of races that is going on all over the Pacific. One little maiden, sitting bolt upright, regarded us with contemplative almond eyes like a small Kwannon. Composure, dignity, and a kind of placid suffering were writ on the countenance of this upright lassie.

"She is partly Chinese," said the doctor.

Next to her a little dark face glowed out of the pillow with a kind of exotic splendour. It was a Filipino face, enriched, enlivened, pointed up, more glowing, more strange. The black hair curled a little above big eyes that had a curious light in them, vaguely suggestive to me of expressions I had known well.

"She is partly American negro," said the doctor. "That mixture often makes children of great personal beauty."

On the opposite side lay a child with a long face and a certain delicacy of hand and feature.

"She has Spanish blood," said the doctor as he turned to go.

The woman's ward Percy was not allowed to visit. Whereupon he decided that I was not interested in it, either, and bundled me into the car again. As we rode home, the heavens and all the horizons round about were fired with a great and awful sunset. For here in the tropics there is no pensive and gradual decay of light, no twilight amenities, no pearly colourings, as in our northern lands. There is only a swift and awful conflagration as day crashes into darkness and the great clouds roll flaming across the very face of night.

That evening, when I dined with Percy, he grew communicative and told me the story of his wealth. He was the second son of a modest country gentleman who gave him an excellent education but left his property to the eldest son. It was expected that Percy would either go into the church, find a sinecure position in the government, or set up some colonial enterprise too remote to sully the genteel escutcheon of his house. These alternatives were equally distasteful to Percy. While he was an undergraduate, he made a speech in a little debating club in which he and some of his fellows used to gather to air their opinions—the substance of which was that the first and most fundamental of crimes is poverty. The willingness of the average man to be poor, to sell his life into daily slavery for just enough to keep him going, is a soil in which all the wrong and oppression and thievery in the world flourish. "The thing for each man to do," he said, "is to go after money—not a little money, mind you, but a lot of it. The world could yield every human being an adequate fortune if we'd only treat it right. As for me, I am going to get money. I'm going to get so much while

I am young that I'll never have to think of it again, and can live out my life in peace. If you don't meet and throttle this matter of finance at the outset, you are its slave for life."

There was a boyish audacity in the idea, but he had realized it in all the effort of his manhood. After disgracing his family by going "into trade" as a menial in a Scottish firm, he had saved and worked and bought shares. Now he owned that firm, and it was one of the largest in the world. At thirty-nine he had "succeeded."

He should have been a happy man. But happiness is a blossom as capricious as love, and no man can tell in what soil it will take root. As I looked at his tense face, his keen but miserable eyes, his slightly trembling hand, I thought of the freshness, the pure boyish gaiety of one I knew whose career had blossomed along the highways of poverty and adventure that paid no homage to property and asked no alms of wealth. He looked like one who had put his very soul into the crucible that had drawn his gold from the world.

While we were talking thus at dinner, I realized that I was becoming an object of notice to a gorgeous thing at a nearby table, a gleaming, silken creature, sleek with the hand of the masseuse and all alight with jewels. Finally from her vanity bag, she drew out a little gold and gemmed pencil, and scribbled a note which the waiter brought to Percy. With an apology to me, he glanced at it, and tucked it away in his pocket, with a constrained, bitter little smile.

Afterwards, as we walked in the garden, he inquired about the meaning of the little ring on my finger, and when I told him, briefly and frankly, he patted me gravely on the head, and said I was a good girl and deserved to be happy. Then pacing up and down in his

restless way, while I sat on the bench beneath a palm-tree, he burst out, addressing me by my Christian name: "Marjorie, will you listen to me if I tell you something—something only about myself? I don't know why I have felt, from the first day, that you were somehow appointed to be my confessor; perhaps it's just that I am a neurotic fool."

He paused, and I reassured him, as best I could, awaiting his confidence with curiosity and a kind of dread. He walked up and down in silence for a moment, and then said, "You won't think me a cad if I show you her note, will you?"

He drew out the scrap of paper on which the gleaming lady had written: "Don't flirt so hard, Percy. Remember India." It was signed, "Dinkey."

Tearing it into bits, he started to speak, hesitated, paced up and down in silence, and then finally said: "I can't do it, Marjorie. But I'll write you a long letter, may I? I'll write it on shipboard and mail it back from Hongkong."

I felt a little sceptical about this, but concurred, both glad and sorry to be released, and we returned in silence to the door of the hotel.

Next day, at noon, the ship sailed, and with it Percy sailed out of my life, still begging and receiving permission to write me something of his mysterious story. I never received the letter. It may be that, like others, it followed me from port to port, till it fell to pieces unread. It may be that, having relieved his heart, he himself tore it to pieces. But no doubt the whole impulse to confess died in the impersonal and widening distance between us. He was a man to touch the heart and pique the interest and flatter the vanity of any girl. Yet I was almost relieved when he resigned me to more

peaceable movements in humbler paths. He reminded me of the Turk's conception of British progress: "Whir-whir—all by wheels. Whiz-whiz—all by steam." In the puzzle and the hopes of my own simple life at that time, there seemed small room for a force so powerful, egoistical, and disturbing.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE M. D. DIVISION OF THE BUREAU OF LABOR

PERCY had given me little opportunity to run down all my mail, so that it was not till after his departure that its full purport burst upon me. From the time that I first discovered how uncertain in the Orient were my postal connections with home, I had directed that all important letters be sent to Manila and held there till a certain date, when I would either come for them or indicate a place to which they might be forwarded. So there was a pile of documents awaiting me, and mere paper and stamps could hardly be more overwhelming. For, from first to last, they fulfilled that old hope of mine of India, now forgotten, in the shape of tasks, orders, funds, and passport. Never was a dream more inopportunely consummated. Why should this new prospect and duty be interposed in a situation already tangled? Yet through it all there gleamed a little hope. Everything had been arranged so that I need not be home till January. If I could wait till January, perhaps Sydney could come home with me, perhaps—but why detail the possibilities? In those days we hung upon the word *perhaps*, for chance then ruled even the destinies of nations and turned our lives from day to day into most unexpected courses.

In this dilemma I fell back upon a method which is exasperating to many people, but which brings to those who can practise it both diversion and peace of mind.

I simply put the matter by, and waited. There was still the cable from home to come.

In the interim, I turned to look more closely into my new strange neighbourhood, this last frontier of the Americans—and so I came to know a little more of Manila, and something of the country beyond it, even to the lairs of the negritos in the mountains. Manila itself was a leisurely moss-grown town, shadowed by trees, which bore no stamp of the hustling commercial race that has assumed the guidance of its destinies. There are few fine office buildings or satisfactory shops. Though we are said to be a money-getting people, the Philippine protectorate is the only government by white men in the Orient which is not primarily commercial in origin and purpose. In Hongkong, in Shanghai, in Singapore, the outstanding buildings are those devoted to big business or the governmental and social relations growing out of it. In Manila it is quite otherwise. The structures built under American supervision are mainly educational or philanthropic in character and suggest not so much the ambition of New York City as the studious repose of Cambridge or Princeton.

Indeed, it is the work of the educator which gives the special character to our rule, bringing into Philippine life, at its beginning and very heart, a new quality of mind and mannerism, unmistakable as the taste of an olive. Sometimes, as I passed by beneath the overhanging galleries of some old Spanish house, catching a glimpse behind the arched doorway of a courtyard where palms grew among remnants of broken pottery, and the family washing hung on the palms, I would smile to see some little figure in hair-ribbons and middy blouse emerging, and under its arms an arithmetic, a geography, and a Fourth Reader all nicely strapped together. A

quaint emanation of foreign rule, the quainter for the imported detail of dress and educational paraphernalia! At noon such emanations would fill the streets, boys and girls walking together in co-educational freedom, sunny, talking little creatures oddly like school-children in America.

Of this student life I saw more when I moved into one of the girls' dormitories associated with the University of the Philippines. These dormitories are supported by various philanthropic and religious agencies, among them the Y. M. C. A., the Methodists, and the Catholic Church.

The hostel in which I was lodged was much like any school dormitory at home, except that there was less "rough-housing" and "student activities." It was full of soft brown kittenlike maidens who never seemed to scamper and scream along the corridors after the fashion of my own school-days, but who created an atmosphere of soft laughter and low, purring talk. They were not above little pranks, like stealing each other's bananas at supper, and there was among them a variety of small feuds. But the external peace of the house remained unbroken. When I met these maidens pattering along the corridors in their kimonos on the way to a bath, or spluttering under the cold water in the big stone-floored lavatory, they used to smile shyly upon me, and their faces were like placid little forest pools with the glint of sunlight upon them.

Some of the girls were still high-school lassies in the middy and skirt that form the standard uniform in schools under American tutelage. Some of them were demure young ladies in the university who wore the shoulder draperies and long trains of the Filipino costume and flirted delicately with invisible beings over



In the British legation in Peking the scars of the Boxer uprising are now healed with grass and flowers



These little brown women had the grace and naturalness of wild animals



Here was a chance to penetrate the charming mystery behind
the vine-covered veranda



My mind reached out to the wilder nooks and crannies of the
island of Luzon

the telephone. Usually these conversations were in English, and I would smile to hear the quaint phrases rippling along with a curious lack of accent which made them seem not our own emphatic speech at all, but some more melodious tongue.

For a day or two after I arrived, all went well. Then one morning we awoke to face a strike. A factory nearby was offering higher wages, and the "boys" who ran the household machinery had all departed. Even my "boy," who used to polish my floors by skating wildly around the room on two cloths attached to his two bare feet, was gone. The whole domestic staff, it seems, had been going to night-school, which had caused them to develop a scorn of home economics.

Consternation reigned. The cumbrous mechanics of Oriental housekeeping cannot proceed without armies of servants. They take the place of plumbing and gas and most other household appliances. The tale of our troubles went abroad through the educational world. Suddenly a deliverer appeared. A smart Filipino youth with an American smile presented himself at the door with a note. It read: "The M. D. Division of the Bureau of Labour offers its services."

The M. D. Division of the Bureau of Labour proved to be the Methodist Dormitory for young men, who were students in the university. Here was a chance to penetrate the charming mystery behind the vine-covered porch and the shy brown faces of the dormitory for young women. All day the M. D. Division arrived—smiling, debonair, prodigiously interested in household tasks, announcing, with one eye on the matron and the other upon some delicate dark head peering over the banister, that their "union would go the labour unions one better."

When news of these domestic volunteers went abroad through all the recesses of the house, there was a flutter and prattle among the inhabitants of the dormitory. Then one by one each maiden discovered that she also had a singular aptitude for domestic affairs. So, when a row of young men filed in on one side, a row of extremely helpful young women filed in on the other. The masculine half of the new labour union glanced gleefully around the room, and kept up a continual flow of smart talk. But the feminine half adjusted its draperies, looked at its slim little feet, and said nothing. Nevertheless it was a most delectable dinner-hour. Every one was so busy waiting on tables that there was no one left to be waited upon.

This heavenly condition of affairs lasted for two days. Then a new batch of "boys" arrived, and the temporary incumbents reluctantly resigned from their jobs. But in all the restless stirrings of the proletariat in the Philippines, as elsewhere, there is one body of citizens for whom labour troubles in their near vicinity have no terrors, and that is the M. D. Division of the Bureau of Labour.

CHAPTER XXIX

BACK TO THE PRIMITIVE

THOUGH I found student life of the Philippines amusing and delightful,—fresh, humorous, buoyant, with all sorts of Yankee mannerisms and customs,—my imagination reached out to wilder nooks and crannies of this great island of Luzon. I had heard of the Igorrotes, a gifted tribe of ex-head-hunters who were now yielding a little to the overtures of imported Americanism, and of the negritos, a tribe of pygmies inhabiting certain remote corners of the mountains. They were thought to be remnants of an aboriginal folk who once inhabited considerable portions of the world and are probably more nearly representative of the first human beings who appeared on this globe than any other living tribes. They survive here and there in the islands of the Pacific and in Africa in certain fastnesses where they must have taken refuge against the hordes of bigger and hardier men out of which the savages of historic times were bred. A shy, nomad folk, hard to find and come among, they had learned to trust certain of the native Protestants who maintained a Filipino as missionary in their midst. Through the medium of this person I hoped to gain access to their haunts.

I was warned not to undertake such a journey. I could find no one to travel with me, and the season was bad. For these were the months of rains. The island of Luzon resembled a sponge. Squeeze it anywhere, and it exuded water. Half of it was now a mud-hole and half

of it a luxuriant tangle of vegetation, now grown blowsy and ungraceful from too much nourishment, like a fat woman. Everything was in a process of solution. One almost expected the whole island to be washed away into the waves of the warm encroaching ocean. I was warned that the roads would be torrents, and the railroads would be washed out, and that I should probably be stuck somewhere, like Noah on Mount Ararat, to await the subsidence of water.

Nevertheless I started, with only a schedule of places and routes and a limited portion of cash as security. I soon found that, despite the blessed frequency of telephones, bathrooms, and school-teachers, which are the American legacy to the Philippines, there has never been a corresponding development in the comfort of travel. The institutions and amenities which pave the way for the wayfarer in English territory are here almost wholly lacking. There are neither hotels, accommodation houses, nor dak-bungalows—neither tea nor shilling novels. The American who ventures out of Manila must throw himself on the mercy of school-teachers, missionaries, and army folk, wherever he happens to find their encampments. The trains are planned with no regard to Occidental prejudices. There is not even a frequency of white faces at anything that may be deemed official centres. Only neat little bungalows of concrete here and there flourish a starry flag and perhaps a sun-burned Yankee face in token of imported learning and unlimited self-sacrifice in its distribution.

As I went on, a curious loneliness overtook me—so shabby and sombre was the rain-soaked earth, so little and forlorn the railroads and the railroad stations. When some one suggested that I might find an automobile going to Baguio, I proceeded in search of it gladly.

I found it in the sole possession of a freckled, florid, dowdy American, with a red moustache, who announced that he practised law. As we set forth, he grew expansive on the subject. Yes, law was very interesting in the Philippines. Take these Igorrotes, now. They were always squatting on each other's territory, with consequent crude litigation, intended to settle the precise location and value of a stone placed between two strips of mountain earth by an ancestor, who was most probably a head-hunter, and possibly a cannibal—and most certainly an old rascal who never heard of the Ten Commandments. Queer that a civilized man and a Christian should waste his good learning supporting the decision of an old duffer of a heathen now luckily deceased!

Then take the Americans in the Philippines. He couldn't hand them much when it came to the troubles they made for the legal fraternity. He had a case now, a nice chap, graduate of Princeton, in fact, and brought up in a Presbyterian Sunday School, engaged to a perfectly nice girl at home and dead in love with her, too. Yet the young fool had let one of these Filipino girls believe herself married to him, and now he was having the dickens of a time meeting his duplex engagements in matrimony. It would take some money and much law to extricate him. If it weren't for that darn pretty girl back home, he'd tell the young idiot to go whistle for it.

So he grumbled, as we rode through the steaming landscape. Remnants of Spain had now disappeared. We were out in a low, sun-bright land, dank and overgrown and full of muddy pools where the water buffalo stood at ease. Now and then a little naked brown boy emerged from the jungle and called "Hello!" One of the minor results of the American occupation of the

Philippines is that every jungle baby seems to learn this word. Often we sped down long avenues of palms, among which stood the native houses. They were wholly fashioned of woven woods, these houses, like great baskets, and thatched with palm leaves. Set high above the ground on poles, they carried all domestic life into the realms of birds and tree animals, and made their inhabitants seem aboreal citizens who descended only by accident to earth. Afterwards I tasted the hospitality of these strange dwellings and found it good.

So thick and luxuriant were the trees that stood all about our course that only a few of the houses were clearly visible. But it was plain by many signs that these cocoanut groves were populous. In one place an American flag on a palm tree and a hum of voices proclaimed a primary school. Further on, a bamboo held the name-plate of "L. Moreno, Evangelist." There was no sign of L. Moreno's person, much less of his church, but this was evidently a finger-post to salvation that lurked among the cocoanuts.

The floods whereof we had warning were obvious enough. Through river after river we plunged as blithely as if our good vehicle carried keel and sail, till at last we began to climb among the mountains in instant terror of washouts, and the heat fell from us like a woolen blanket. Palms gave place to delicate and fragile pines, and the mists rolled down to meet us. It seemed almost as if we might find sunshine above the lower sky. Then we came into the environment of Baguio, and pleasantly skimmed over macadam roads, past lawns and bungalows. This is the summer capital of the Philippines, and here the rude land was shaved and massaged and made fit for the presence of gentlemen. At that time it was all deserted, but beautiful

in its loneliness. Meanwhile the slim, flat-faced people of the lowlands gave place to a stockier folk of a kind of sooty black—a muscular, sullen-eyed, heavy-browed lot, arrayed in remnants of coats and hats, but boasting not one pair of breeches among them. These were the Igorrotes, an able people, in their way, with a distinguished history as head-hunters.

Just as we reached an inn where we might dry our clothes before a fireplace of mountain stone, the heavens opened and the waters descended. Thereafter, for days on end, the rain flogged the raw and tortured earth, and cut the channels of a thousand rivers, and all my investigations were made in those softer interludes when torrents gave place to showers. Yet, here where I seemed farthest from home and the dear faces of my own kind, I was blessed with the one direct contact with my own land and household that came to me in all my journeying, and here I came to a decision that put half the world between me and my hopes.

CHAPTER XXX

EX-HEAD-HUNTERS

WHILE indecision still hung over my mind, my expected cable came through and found me even in the mountains, being telegraphed to Baguio, and travelling thence to me by the feet of a dripping Igorrote. It was signed by my family and read: "We approve India and Sydney." So instant and so mysterious was this airy message, seeking me out even among the savage heights of the rain-locked mountains, that it filled me for days not only with gladness but with a kind of awe, as if it had come through to me on the wings of spirits, and had found me out by the kindliness of a god. Its purport I could not misunderstand. Written out of a better knowledge of the complex and changing circumstances that ruled my destinies than I myself had at so great a distance, it settled my mind like the casting of a lot. Henceforth my face was set toward India. From those lonely hills I sent forth messages as airily as this had come. To Sydney I cabled my decision to go on to India and return to Japan to marry him in January. It was the first time I promised more than general fealty, and I looked to the absoluteness of the pledge to atone for my failure to return to Japan immediately.

Apart from the lovely and spiritual contact with home, my chief excitement in Baguio were the Igorrotes. In some respects they were a marvellous set of savages. They had an integrity and skill of hand that civilization itself might well envy. Their hills terraced and

fortified against floods with masonry, their houses stoutly built and neatly, though crudely, carpentered, and their beautiful cloths woven of cotton to last a lifetime, and dyed in clear, lustrous greens and yellows and blues and scarlets that knew no fear of rain or sunshine—all attested to the wholesomeness and finish of their simple, material culture. But they also had customs which were, to my mind, unseemly. For instance, they dined on dogs. At first this information did not disturb me, for I imagined this canine food of theirs to be the flesh of some wolfish creature, as different from our Gyps and Fidos at home as a tiger is different from a domestic pussy. With the first visit to the dog market, this comfortable assurance vanished. The creatures there offered for sale and cooking were mongrel in breed, but such as might have played about some village street at home. In their pensive brown eyes there seemed capacities for play and simple frolic that could add much to the joy of children and the comfort of a lonely house, but very little flavour to the dinner. One would as soon think of eating one's own brother.

The Igorrotes have been taught to be rather proud of their savagery. They used to come around to sell me the baskets in which it had been the custom of their people to carry home the heads of enemies. And they expected me to delight in certain carvings of intertwined male and female figures executed in hard wood with some skill of hand and considerable tainted enjoyment. Many Americans enjoy collecting these barbarous things, but I thought I should as soon live with their makers. Once, after looking at some of these little figures, I came upon the old wooden door of a Spanish monastery, carved by the hand of piety and covered with fresh green paint. The technique was feeble and sentimental. It showed

no vigour of touch nor acuteness of anatomical observation. But the carving represented a monk with a laughing babe in his arms. The child held out his little hands as if to romp and crow, but the head of the monk was downcast and melancholy, and his cheek pressed tenderly against the body of the little one in wistfulness and renunciation. Though the lives of these old *fratres* in the Philippines had been far from edifying, I could not but think, as I compared the Igorrote and the Spanish carving, how far the thoughts of men climb in their progress out of savagery to civilization.

Among the Igorrotes, the Americans have succeeded in establishing some schools, mostly agricultural and trade schools, where the pupils may practise their minds in the morning and their hands in the afternoon. The nice young man in charge of one of these institutions spoke with a beaming, Y. M. C. A. sort of enthusiasm of the progress of his pupils. Some pupils apparently did not return these Christian compliments in kind; for when he ushered me into an empty shack where the youngsters learned English, there on the board was scrawled some boy's first spontaneous use of the new language. "*This school good is not. Nothing doing.*"

With such brave excursions into the torrents as my wardrobe would stand, I stayed in these mountains some days. I used to call each day's excursion quits, when I had used up the last available scrap of dry clothing, and had to sit before the fire and wait for the processes of evaporation to take their course. Yet the rain was not wholly an evil. It gave to these hills a romantic wildness and loneliness, a remoteness from all the world. Forgotten of the sunshine, cut off from the kindly traffic of men, they seemed a place where all the spirits of nature might meet and sport.

One evening at sunset the rain abated a little and I walked out among the mists that swept down from the heights. I was alone and without a guide, for I thought that the twinkle of light from my lodging would point the way back. As I walked on, I felt almost as if I had left my body and all the world behind, and had come into some dim and ghostly region beyond the bourne of earthly life. Suddenly a great white figure of a Madonna, with a child in her arms, emerged like some living thing from the mists, tall and starry white, and most graciously beautiful. Awe and terror shook my mind. Was I a nun or a saint that I should see visions and dream dreams and meet Our Lady walking visibly upon the heights? Then I understood. It was the figure of the Virgin Mary which certain Belgian fathers had set among the rocks to sweeten and disinfect, as it were, the memories of old savagery. The twilight and the mists and the ghostly company of the rain-soaked hills seemed to startle her image into life and inform it with ghostly being.

CHAPTER XXXI

THE PYGMIES

"No, no, señorita. It is impossible."

"But I must see the negritos."

"No, señorita, there are floods all the way. You cannot go up the mountain."

"But didn't you come down the mountain?"

"Si, señorita; but I came barefoot."

"If you could come down the mountain barefoot, I can go up it on the same kind of shoe-leather."

Before me stood a little man from the mountains, dripping and splashed with mud, and beside him Rosaria, a Filipino deaconess, beneath whose gauzy winged sleeves and long muslin train, I knew, beat the heart of a child of the jungle—fearless of heat and intimate with rain. Rosaria had said that she would chaperon me on my trip into the mountains to see the negritos. And taking her at her word, I had landed in this palmy little Filipino village, without escort or interpreter or any American assistance. I had been greeted with information that my proposed ascent of the mountains was impossible. Every trail was flooded. To corroborate her statement she sent for this little man from the mountains who came swimming down to warn me. But I persisted. What they could do I could do, and did they not live and move in this yearly deluge of water? And, when with the small English we held between us, I made my intention plain, Rosaria offered no further objections. It was settled. I was to ascend the mountains barefoot.

While she tucked up her muslin train, I removed my shoes and girded up the soft, dark silk dress I wore in travelling. For the next few hours I knew the world only in terms of my feet. A whole new realm of sensation was opened to me. First there was the long walk on a squashy, muddy trail through rice-fields where my feet pressed deep into ooze that was as hot as if it were cooking over subterranean fires. Then we began to climb upon a trail through the long grass. Ten feet high and more, this grass overtopped me like a forest of trees, and created around me a strange green world. And as I climbed, across my toes trickled little streams cool from the mountain, and the grass cast down on me its treasured raindrops in showers. Sometimes there were pleasant moments when one might go softly upon a bit of turf or moss, or awkward ones when the stones cut and the brambles pricked, and ever and anon we stepped waist-high into mountain torrents that swept away a weight of gathered mud from our feet and with it some feverishness and protesting pain. As we climbed, the world grew cooler, and the thatched houses of the lowlands vanished. Here the world was silent and very lonely, for the tropical woods seem always to lack that multitudinous stir and buzz and singing of life that we know among our northern forests, and all its wild inhabitants apparently are dumb. Since I walked faster than my companions, and my feet, over-delicate with the long protection of civilization, more insistently craved rest, I sprinted ahead of the guide up the mountain, thinking by my speed to gain an interval of repose. In a few minutes the trees had hidden them from me, and I was quite alone.

Suddenly there was a rustle among the bushes. Before me on the trail stood the tiniest man I had ever seen.

He looked like an elf, or a brownie at least. He was quite naked, delicately muscular and upright in his bearing. In his hand he held a long bow. He paused, as startled as I, then smiled hospitably from beneath his shock of curling black hair, and vanished with a kind of war-whoop up the trail. I had seen the first of the negritos. Being a bit bashful about intruding on these strange little folk without introduction, I stopped and waited for the guide and Rosaria.

When they came up, we three emerged in a slightly cleared space, where there was a kind of lean-to against a tree. Out of it swarmed the little people. They were only about four feet high, tiny as children, yet with the carriage of men, though in some cases a little dwarfed and out of proportion. There were little old grand-sires with shocks of grey hair and wee wrinkled faces, and miniature grandmothers, and the tiniest babes I ever saw. They were clad in the skirt and loin-cloths that are the well-nigh universal costume of Malay lands, and both their garb and the materials of which it was fashioned indicated some dealings with the lowlands. The naked little man who had greeted me on the trail now appeared in the remnant of a frock-coat, whose skirt trailed behind him on the ground like a train.

Conversation with them was about as instructive as a dialogue with squirrels, since Rosaria and I understood not a syllable of their lingo, and the guide made shift with about five phrases. But we gathered that they lived on herbs and a little hill rice which they spasmodically cultivated, flavoured with the meat of such animals as they could kill. When they had exhausted the food-supply in one place, they moved on to another. They were in a hurry to move now, because one of their number had died, which plainly signified that an evil spirit had taken up his abode in this place, and the better part



A naked little jungle boy emerged and said "Hello"



The Igorrotes are an able tribe with a distinguished history
as head-hunters



The Igorrotes have an unseemly habit of dining on dogs



She was enjoying her first lesson in co-education

of medicine was flight. None of them showed any interest in me, except the little man who had put on some manners with his frock-coat. They watched me dully, as if smiles and gestures were a language they did not know. But they passively stood aside while I examined their community building, a rudely thatched roof, with a kind of shelf running under about half of it, on which they might climb out of the way of floods. It interested me, because like the dwellings of so many of the Pacific tribes, it seemed a primitive sketch of the idea which has been developed in the beautiful and highly finished houses of Japan.

Naturally, conversation with these little beings did not proceed apace, and the external details of their lives offered little food for curiosity. Bowing them a farewell to which they replied with blank looks, we started downward on the trail, and the trees closed in behind us. Suddenly on the path there popped up a brownie of a wholly different species. A khaki army hat sat upon his little nose, and a flannel army shirt draped him like a woman's frock. "Hello," he said affably, giving us a first-class imitation of a military salute. With an air of vast importance he began to unwrap some great package in his hands. This he presented to us as if it were his card. It was a kind of "Keep Off the Grass" sign bearing the name of the nearest Filipino constabulary. Hearing of us, he had apparently absconded with it by way of a diploma in American civilization. He was no doubt a servant or perhaps a mascot at the camp. The manners of the little man were a perfect imitation of the brisk strut of an American officer. When we offered him a silver coin, he waved it aside magnificently, and saluting again, and saying "Hello" by way of a farewell, he vanished with the "Keep Off the Grass" sign into the forest.

I slept that night in a native house. The dwelling-place of a prosperous Chinese who had long since altered his manners and habitation to the customs of his adopted isle, it was nevertheless more spacious and more finished than those of most of his neighbours. Set high among the trees, and large as a comfortable city apartment, it was wholly woven, like a basket, of twigs and supple woods, and floored with split bamboo that yielded like elastic to the tread. Yet it was furnished with a photograph album and a phonograph, both of which were put through their paces for the guest. These amenities over, I was led to a room that was like the inside of a large basket, and given the freedom of a large Spanish bed. The bed boasted of neither sheets nor mattress—only a straw mat that might serve as one or the other according to my pleasure.

Through half the night I turned and tossed in exclusive concentration of my mind upon the remains of my feet. Utterly outwearied, I fell asleep toward dawn. I was awakened by a hot splash of sunshine across my face and the song of an ecstatic bird. The room was alive with sunshine that sifted in flakes and twinkles through the interstices of the woven walls; and luxuriating for a moment in that sunny waking, breathing the grassy fragrance that seemed still to linger in the materials of the house, and looking out over the tops of low bushes, upon the dewy and gleaming jungle, I thought that no luxury of a civilized morning had ever matched the pure, primeval gladness of that emergence from dreams.

This was my last adventure in the Philippines. Footsore, sunburned, and starving for real food, I found my way back to Manila, and was taken again into the arms of the great sea which had already borne me so far.

CHAPTER XXXII

AT THE THRESHOLD OF INDIA

FOUR weeks after I had entered Manila, I sailed out of it, with my face to the South and the East. Beyond lay India, and the ancient magic of the word was already beginning to bind my reluctant thoughts to itself. That I should enter India easily I had no doubt. Had I not engaged passage long since in Shanghai for this very month? Was I not provided with a passport of the nation, at that moment the mightiest in the world?

But at Hongkong these pleasant little dreams were dissipated. I was too late for my sailing. The passage which was the original cause of my excursion had just been pre-empted by some one else, in my default, and the last ship which promised conveyance to India for a six-month had left Hongkong. Moreover, it seemed that the British government had something to say about my entering India. Why did I want to go? Was I a pacifist, a socialist, a democrat, or a spy? Here my sex came to my rescue. No, I said, I was merely a nice girl—I had friends in India (remembering at that moment some friends of Sydney's who might substantiate this claim). I wrote a little, I added, "quite harmless stuff."

"Love stories?" asked the nice young emissary of the British government who was examining my orthodoxy, with a smile,—and I let the matter pass with that, though the love story was the one form of literature I had never attempted. The British government, in the

form in which it had presented itself, was touched with my plea, though I must confess it sounded suspicious to my own ears, and finally added all the insignia of Hongkong to my passport with the air of presenting me with a box of chocolates.

Somewhat fortified with the imperial decorations on my pass, I returned to Cook's office. Was there no way of getting to India? None, said the agent, with decision, adding that, if I wanted to take a little jaunt to Singapore and discover how hopeless it was, there was a wretched little bark proceeding in that general direction with people bound for Borneo. On this passage I promptly seized, and next day I found myself at sea in a little boat, scarcely larger than a river tug, committed to an indefinite course southward along the coasts of Asia. Of this voyage there is little to tell. We stopped at a Chinese port or two, ran up two or three rivers, and then slipped into quiet, tropical seas, and saw no land for nine days. My cabin-mate was a Mrs. Robins, a British woman scarce out of girlhood, the daughter of a British Admiral. For three years she had lived under the hourly terror of the air raids, and most of the men of her family were dead or vilely injured. She often talked of the war but always with a curious, hard, impersonal gaiety, and spent her time flirting restlessly with the two or three Englishmen on board and putting on and off the lacy, extravagant wardrobe which she had purchased by way of celebrating her escape from England. She was going to join the remnants of her family in Borneo, but was fundamentally indifferent to them as to everything else. Yet, for all her apparent lack of heart and conscience, she remained a nice woman and a lady

from sheer force of habit, nor could any present performance wholly conceal something nobler in her past.

In almost intolerable ennui the days dragged on. The men played cards from dawn to sunset, and talked, when they talked at all, about the war. On this point two weeks without news (for we had had none since we left Hongkong) raised every one's anxiety to the fever pitch. When we had sailed from Hongkong there had been faint stirrings of hope. The German offensive was broken; the Americans were in with both feet. What next?

One morning I was awakened from a suffocation of damp heat, by a kind of parody of an old familiar sound: "Extra! Extra!" I sat up and listened. The voice went on, "Surrender of Turkey," and there were wild whoops and a mighty scramble of feet. I looked out. The ship had come to rest in a harbour. Beyond, the low, white, many-arched buildings of Singapore were shining out of the blue mist and opaque sunlight of the equatorial morning. I whistled a query about the celebration above out of my porthole, to a strange dark being with a beard and scarlet petticoat who was bobbing around in a boat just beneath me. This hermaphrodite, it seemed, was a money-changer who had come out to greet the ship. The most enterprising of the Englishmen had met him, and had told him he would have to prove that his filthy dollars were good money by going back to land and buying a newspaper with them—and now this same Englishman was parading his prize around the decks above.

I digested my thoughts on the news in silence. On these surrenders hung all my plans, and, perhaps for that reason, I stifled hope. Yet hope is the most stub-

born of the emotions of the heart, and the high spirits which the news induced in the British passengers added something to the natural gladness of landing.

I had come to Singapore in a tub, and it was plain that if I was to get away in any direction, even by the path I had come on, it would have to be in a cocoanut shell. Ships on the Eastern seas were growing scarcer and scarcer, and there was not a steamship company that would promise me passage of any sort to any point except Java. Yet every day I called on the offices of ocean-going barks, patient and persistent.

Meanwhile, there was the pageantry of the streets of Singapore which not even one so pre-occupied as I could see without daily pleasure. Already I was beginning to breathe the air of India; for Singapore has the atmosphere, the perfume, of India, something unmistakable as the breath of sandal wood. Singapore is indeed a little epitome of the Orient. It is the meeting-point for the three great types of Oriental peoples—the yellow people of the North and East; the brown-skinned, lazy seafaring races of the Pacific Island world; and those dusky men of southern and western Asia whose haughty aquiline features proclaim them to be half-brothers of our own.

If you come to Singapore from Hongkong or Manila, you are struck at once by a black intruder upon the familiar landscape. As the municipal burden-bearer, lean, polished, and clothed only in a carmine-coloured turban, as the money-changer with a feminine coiffure and skirt and a masculine beard, as the robed and turbaned proprietor of gems and tinsel embroidery, he is the distinguishing feature of the place. Otherwise Singapore looks like any other foreign settlement in the Eastern tropics. There is the Bund, the avenue along



Out of the jungle lean-to swarmed the pygmy people



There were miniature mothers and the tiniest babes I ever saw



I made some research into social conditions in the cosmopolitan community of Singapore



We kept passing majestic, turbaned figures, like ghosts out of some old Bible

the sea-front where ladies with parasols and gentlemen in white duck and sun-helmets promenade beneath the palms. There is the harbour full of great ships and quaint little vessels from many a jungly isle and crocodile-haunted river. There are the low, many-arched and many-windowed buildings of a tropical land gleaming white in the sunlight, or touched perhaps with a richer glow of pink or yellow. There is the casual light of scarlet flowers. It is a picture compounded of familiar elements.

The most interesting of all the many-coloured citizens of Singapore was the hero whom I nicknamed Aladdin. He was a noble-looking creature. All day he sat behind piles of precious stones—sapphires, rubies, garnets, topazes, amethysts, aquamarines, tourmalines, and moonstones—green sapphires and rubies of delicate pink, and aquamarines, blue as the tropical sea or silvery pale as the light of tropical moon, and moonstones that were like the morning fog with the sun shining into it. When I stopped to interview him, he carelessly scattered his treasures before me like one who had the stars for playthings. But this was only a preliminary greeting. If I stayed awhile, he grew confidential. Gradually he would produce from folds and pouches and small secret drawers and invisible arcana about his person little bits of white tissue-paper, each enfolding some special and wonderful stone, caressing them, polishing them, letting the light flash into their hearts and relating their history and peculiar properties. He always offered these treasures to ladies at cost price. He said he scorned to make a profit by a lady; he lived by cheating the gentlemen who buy jewels for ladies.

So the days passed at Singapore, in casual wanderings among the streets by way of pastime and a more steady

research into the social conditions of this cosmopolitan community—whose results I cannot detail here; for there soon came a rush of events—the Rubber King, and the Road to Mandalay—and beyond Singapore another and a stranger world.

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE RUBBER KING

IT happened one evening that I was dining at the hotel with Mrs. Robins, who had not yet found a sailing to Borneo. Afterwards, as we sat in the open, palmy lobby looking out over the sea, a burly, cheerful youth joined us and remarked affably without even the formality of a good evening: "Well, I have got rid of those fellows. They wanted me to play poker. I hate poker, don't you? I thought I would rather talk to you. May I order you a liqueur?"

He seemed so much at home that Mrs. Robins and I each thought he must be a friend of the other's. The drink I refused but she accepted it gracefully. He proceeded to give his orders to a languid, turbaned lackey in accents unmistakably American: "Two cherry brandy liqueurs, boy; and look here, boy, you might just try to run a little. I know you don't know how—'tisn't done here. But just begin to practise up. Savvy? Make your feet go chop-chop."

Then, settling down in a chair, he volunteered an account of his call on the Sultan of Jahore. He had come out here on a flying trip to look after the property of the Browning Rubber Company. He was Browning. His father had "mislaid his money" when this youth was "a kid" and so he had "lost out" on an education, but, beginning at fourteen, had succeeded in recovering his property.

He bought all the rubber on the Sultan's estates. "He

is a nice old boy—the Sultan,” he confided to us. “I always respected him because he has business ability—which is unusual in a ruler. So when I got here, I just sent him word that I intended to call. When I saw him, I said: ‘Well, Your Highness, what have you got for us?’ And he said, bowing all over the place: ‘A tiger-hunt.’ That got my goat. A tiger is all right in his sphere, but it doesn’t do to argue with him, ’cause he’s got a rotten disposition. So I said: ‘Look here, Your Highness, I’ll tell you what we’ll do. You just go and kill that tiger yourself, and when he’s all nice and dead, I’ll—why, I’ll come around and look at him.’

“So I merely stayed to tiffin with him, and he showed me around the palace and all that—nice little joint he has there, but I wouldn’t live in it if he gave it to me. Afterward the Sultan presented me with the skin of a man-eating tiger—a beautiful thing with an absolutely perfect head and a complete row of teeth—nothing doing for the dentist in that beast. I am going to have it put in a glass case with a little brass sign saying: ‘Presented to J. A. Browning by the Sultan of Jahore.’ I’ll hang it in my parlour at home. Then every one who sees it will say: ‘Great old boy, that Browning. Look how he gets on with royalty.’ And I do,” he ended modestly, “I get on fine with sultans.”

Then, fixing his cheerful blue eyes on me, he announced: “You know, I was watching you all through dinner and I just made up my mind I’d start in to rush you. You don’t mind, do you? ’Cause when I start after a girl, I make myself a regular nuisance. I never stop till she just absolutely kicks me out.”

I did not have the slightest doubt of that. When he took sultans by storm, what was a mere girl to expect? But I answered, “Oh, no, I don’t mind in the least. Go

ahead if it amuses you," and waited to see how he would proceed.

His procedure was worthy of a conquerer of sultans. He whistled, and out of the palmy darkness, like a magic carpet in an Arabian Nights tale, there rolled an elegant grey touring-car, slender, graceful, noiseless as some beautiful animal, with an enormous turbaned potentate in charge.

"Rather nice little wagon, I think," said the Rubber King, with modest pride. "I got it for my stay here. Thought you might take a ride in it."

Mrs. Robins rose to the occasion at once. She, it seems, was my official chaperon. I never knew it till that minute. But as my official chaperon she forthwith accepted, and I—poor little *jeune fille* that I was—had nothing to say in the matter. So I found myself installed in the car with her, rolling away—heaven knows where—into the scented, starry darkness.

"Now what I want to know," I reflected, "is whether this is an elopement or a movie."

Above our heads the palms were silhouetted against the burning stars. To our right the sea gleamed wan and silvery in the night, and the waves broke lazily against the sands, with the long, slow, soft swish that is the peculiar music of the sea on tropical shores. The sweetness and solemnity of the night subdued the clattering tongue of the Rubber King to poetry and sentiment.

"The other evening," he said softly, "when I was moored on the calm waters beneath the cocoanut trees, and I looked up and saw those majestic palms against the stars, and the waters below all shining full of stars, I just said: 'Oh, God—gee, but I'm glad.' And I guess I was nearer praying than I've been for a long time."

As we rode along, we kept passing majestic turbaned figures that seemed in the darkness like ghosts out of some old Bible. One stopped and anxiously held up a smoking torch right in the face of our headlight, as if that would enable him to see us.

"On my soul," said the Rubber King, "it's Diogenes with his lantern. Hello, Di," he continued affably. "How's the tub? Rents going up yet? Tell me when you get ready to take in boarders."

"You see," he remarked complacently, turning to me, as the turban, torch, and draperies noiselessly melted into the night shadows, "you see I'm friends with all of them."

He then proceeded to demonstrate to me how to look at tropical stars. "The fact is," he said, "that the minute the sun sets, one should abandon the vertical position—just cease to be vertical and become horizontal, like this." And I found myself suddenly seized and laid out flat upon the seat, staring straight up into a universe of stars. "Speed her up, sais," he called out to the chauffeur, and the car leaped forward at a pace that would have landed her straight in the police-station in any civilized country. "Now watch 'em whiz," he said, pinning me down with his arms, while the stars swept by above like a "swirl of golden bees."

It was a strange sensation—dizzy, breathless, delicious; and the whirling stars acted like a species of hypnotism. I felt as if my head were dissolving into a series of golden wheels and I were spinning straight off into space.

"It's fine, isn't it—Goldilocks?" he whispered, leaning over me till his face almost touched my hair. I tore myself loose from that starry enchantment and jumped up-right in the speeding car.

"Yes, they're pretty stars," I answered, sinking down in the seat. "And now Mrs. Robins wants to go home."

Obviously Mrs. Robins wanted nothing of the sort. Her idea of the duties of a chaperon was to enjoy a plutocrat's incidental attentions and maintain a strict policy of *laissez faire*. But I decided that in her official capacity it was now her duty to want to go home, and I intended to see that she did it. The Rubber King showed no signs of turning the car around.

"This ride," he said, "is only just begun. We are going a long ways yet!"—adding in a tone which explained how he happened to be a Rubber King at such an early age: "When I speak, I expect to be minded."

"Yes, I know," I answered. "So do I." And the end of it was that in a short time we rolled up to the hotel veranda.

For some moments I had been gravely silent. "This," I was reflecting, "is evidently a cave-man, though an interesting specimen of what my country produces. All cave-men should be civilized or ostracized as soon as possible." I was wondering which course of treatment he required.

There are men who can stand everything but a woman's silence. He was evidently that sort. I could feel his nerve dissolving by the minute. When he said good night, he lingered, making ridiculous remarks to Mrs. Robins till I was taken off my guard and smiled at one of them. "Thanks for smiling," he whispered in my ear. "More rushing to-morrow." Then he was gone.

"Poor soul," thought I, "he is going to be disappointed."

And so he was; for by the time he got around with his car next afternoon I had discovered the Road to Mandalay and was one hundred miles out at sea. I suppose he consoled himself by calling on the Sultan.

CHAPTER XXXIV

ON THE ROAD TO MANDALAY

It happened this way. Early next day I set out on my daily round of calls on the steamship-companies. It was a process that was becoming automatic. As I stood there, explaining to the clerk that it was his duty to produce a passage, a pleasant Englishman who was standing by suddenly said:

"Would you go on a freight-boat?"

I protested my willingness to be any kind of cargo.

"There's quite a crowd of us," he said, "who have found a boat from Christmas Island that they intend to send over to Rangoon to-day with sugar. It starts in an hour, and there's room for one."

"I think I shall be the one," I answered, not knowing where Rangoon was nor at all positive that I could galvanize the leisurely transportation facilities of Singapore into getting me to the boat in an hour.

Sixty minutes later I was launched for a week's journey on a silken sapphire sea, so closely packed in with casually collected passengers that it seemed as if half of us would have to hang ourselves over the side of the boat while the other half turned around. The passengers consisted of two or three highly differentiated ladies, a Bushwhacker, and half a dozen fresh-faced Englishmen all cut from exactly the same pattern. We were stowed away in cabins warranted to hold "two able-bodied seamen." These cabins were marvels of economy in space, but in that respect they could not equal the

bathroom. This was a yard square, and furnished with a jug of water and a hole—*inclusive*. One poured the water over one's self, and it ran down the hole, and the fishes drank it. That was one's bath. This scientific arrangement broke the ice for us. Scintillating discussion of its merits filled the ship as we steamed out over the blazing white waters of the Malacca Straits.

It was one long picnic—that jolly company alone on the freight-boat on the warm ocean. Day after day we steamed under the white sunshine of the equator, and only the flying fish disturbed the motionless calm of the waters. Bonny creatures they were, like tiny birds; and we loved to watch their brave little flights. Night after night the sun dipped into the sea at the end of what seemed a rod of flame across the waters, and the moon swung upward among stars strangely misplaced on the horizon.

We were bound, not directly for India, but for Burma, and this was the Road to Mandalay, all of which was somewhat dark to my understanding just then, but I trusted to the next harbour for geographical elucidations. All I knew of Mandalay was what Kipling had told about the silken ladies who wasted their Christian kisses on a heathen idol's foot. That there was much more to the silken ladies than that I had yet to learn. Meanwhile one could not but rejoice in the pure content of existence beneath those skies. The soft caressing days gave place, each sunset time, to the purer luxury of night. Then came the long evenings when the smooth waters and the decks were flooded with a warm and magical whiteness, and the waters broke away from the ship, sometimes in sparkles of fire, but mostly in a long wash of feathery light that was like the plumage of shining birds.

One by one in the moonlight strange figures, turbaned figures in flowing draperies, stole out from the depths of the ship and prostrated themselves, calmly, slowly. They were the Mohammedan crew saying their prayers, looking through the gleaming night to Mecca.

Meanwhile the Englishmen improved their opportunities and the moonlight by falling hopelessly in love with the ladies on board for the duration of the voyage. The junglewallah, who was returning from his leave jubilantly engaged to an Australian girl, confined his attentions to the boisterous, buxom Australian flapper on board. He considered her safe, and, besides, the air which had reddened her round cheeks was the air which his beloved breathed. He warned the rest of us not to tamper with his dedicated heart.

Another Englishman, a bachelor and a gentle soul, fell softly, quietly, and unobtrusively in love with the fair young English wife and her little girl, who looked like a pallid baby angel. Mother and child shared his renunciatory devotion equally. As the voyage continued, a melancholy settled upon him, pensive as the tropical moonlight in which he paced back and forth each night on deck, long after the rest of us were occupying the bunks of the able-bodied seamen. Not even the daily romp with the flapper whom every one teased and with whom every last man of them carried on an uproarious flirtation could dispel the gentle influence.

The one flaw in the good fellowship of those days was the Bushwhacker. The Bushwhacker discovered in "Miss U. S. A." his ideal. All his life, it seemed, he had been searching for his ideal, and now he had found her afloat on that little grey tub. It is really inconvenient to be an ideal when one cannot get more than ten feet away

from the worshipper. But he said it was the love of his life. He told every one so.

He did not in the least resemble the usual type of the Bushwhacker. He was small and anemic and preternaturally young. Afterward we discovered that he was nearly sixty, but he looked thirty. He derived his standards of life from diligent attendance on the musical comedies from the United States which sometimes invade Australia. He cherished what he believed to be an American twang, and a snappy American style.

But alas! His notions of what was expected of a man of the world were those of the music-hall. For six days and six moonlit evenings he laid his heart, his hand, and all that was his at the feet of Miss U. S. A., and the prospect of a new and brilliant start in life in South Africa. On the seventh, as we sat outside of Rangoon, his conscience forced him to mention a little impediment. He already had a wife and six children!

The morning after the Bushwhacker's revelations, I was awakened by a masculine voice singing out: "Oh, I say, America, if you don't tumble out pretty quick, you'll find yourself in Mandalay. Rangoon's right outside the window."

I looked through the porthole. We were sliding up a yellow river. The white houses on the low green shores were rosy in the dawn. A boat came alongside—such a boat as we would call in China a junk. It was manipulated by polished black skeletons clothed only in white turbans. Another boat, which turned up at the ends like a mediæval shoe, was bobbing about, full of red turbans that shone like garnets in the sunlight.

"This," I thought, "is India," and felt well content with the vision. I learned later that it was not India,

but Burma, and that there is a vast difference. But for the moment it looked like Kipling to me, and therefore to my eyes it was authentic.

Then something blazed upon the landscape—a gleaming rebuke to English roof-tops, like the architecture of clouds in the dawn. It grew upon my eyes; it expanded like a miracle till it dominated all the sunshine—a dazzle of airy spires and glittering towers, pure gold in the light of the morning. This was the Shwe Dagon pagoda, and I had seen it at its most glorious moment when all its jewelled pinnacles flash into life and radiance at the touch of dawn.

Our ship had now come to rest at the foot of the steps, and in a few minutes I was part of a shining and palmy landscape adorned with most gorgeous figures of humanity. There were, of course, the foreign office buildings, and the miscellaneous collection of men of all colours which throng the streets of an Oriental metropolis, dominated by a few pallid lords of creation who wore ugly white suits and looked as if they were made of dough. In this, Rangoon differed from no other tropical city. But they were but excrescences amidst a more joyous population clothed, men and women alike, in petticoats of rainbow-coloured silks, fluttering and chattering in groups at the feet of alabaster Buddhas and beneath the airy gold of pagoda spires. A people rather Mongolian than Indian, and attached to the empire of India only within the last half century, the Burmese have made a blithe addition to that rather gloomy realm. Something of their charm they owe to the natural wealth of their land, and something to the unique freedom of their women. But the obvious source of their joy is Buddha. Buddhism is the national amusement. Being a light-hearted, indolent, and graceful people, the Burmese have



I ascended through the golden gates into the heart of that
templed world



The carved and gilded shrines were delicate as lace embroidered
with gems



The bronze monks walked by twos and threes within the temple courts



Amidst the flowers and candles of the pagoda, he caught the flirtatious glance of a dainty, saffron maid

made of their religion a bright and pretty thing. They cover the landscape with pagodas like toy-houses and rejoice in merry childlike ceremonies in honour of alabaster Buddhas which are to them like heavenly pets. So on that first morning, while the Madrassi was driving an anxious Englishman to his office, and the naked Tamil was running hither and thither with the burdens of Burma on his back, and the lordly Sikh was guarding the peace of the realm, and the lean Bengali was selling the fruit of the land in the bazaar, the Burmese themselves—merry, suave and clothed like the flowers of spring—were trooping to the temples to gossip at the feet of Buddha, and play awhile with candles and sweet-smelling flowers.

Yet the full gaiety of their faith I scarcely appreciated till I came into the pagoda courts. The pagoda is such a wonder as the gods themselves could not make. A great central dome of gold, capping a hill, and surrounded by circle upon circle of lesser shrines, all golden and jewelled too, it seems a thing which an enterprising god might well translate to the Heavens where it could light the world and outface the sun.

Late in the afternoon I joined the prismatic stream of colour which ascended through the golden gates, and climbed into the heart of that temple world. It was like walking straight into glory-land. There was an endless forest of carved and gilded shrines which seemed to be made of lace embroidered in gems. In the shadowed spaces overhung with carving like the branches of trees were the dwelling-places of alabaster Buddhas in raiment of gold.

Before every god and godling the candles burned. They starred this golden forest like fireflies above a field of flowers. Above the gold, the gems, the candles, and

the white Buddhas was the glory of the flowers. The flowers were everywhere, some white as the enshrined divinities, some yellow like the robes of the bronze monks who walked by twos and threes within the temple-courts. They were piled on flower-stands; they were sold by dusky Indian children clothed only in beads, who pattered after us teasing us to buy, and had to be admonished in strong language. The accumulated blossoms of many worshippers were piled high before the altars; the candles shone softly among them; and the incense mingled with their fresh perfume. Meanwhile the light, the glitter, and the colour were all reflected in the marble pavements that had been made smooth by the passing of many feet. The pavements reflected everything, not clearly and sharply but vaguely, like moving forms and sunset colours mirrored in ice. But the dim suggestion of starry inverted spires and moving gleams of colour and lines of light in the pavement below gave to it all the last touch of unreality—made it seem only a fairy-scene, ephemeral as the bright worlds that seem to lie among the evening clouds.

CHAPTER XXXV

WHERE EVE IS THE GENTLEMAN

When Adam delved, and Eve she span,
Who was then the gentleman?

was a legend on the mug from which I used to imbibe my milk and my earliest social ideals. I confess the question puzzled me. But when I came to Burma, I thought I had found the answer. The gentleman was the lady of Burma. For she adds to a capitalistic supremacy that is masculine, the graces of a very flower of leisure.

Just as every Western boy is supposed to graduate from school into a self-supporting job, so every Burmese girl is expected at adolescence to grow into a little business of her own. It may be weaving, the weaving of those heavy checked silks of yellow and green and purple and rose-colour in which the Burmese men and women go clad like Solomon in his glory. It may even be agriculture. But it is most likely to be small shop-keeping. If she isn't very ambitious, she keeps a shop in her own house. Nearly every village house offers something to sell—cheroots or beetle nuts or even small amber ornaments. And in the morning, before the sun gets too hot for active motion, all her neighbours saunter in and enjoy an exchange of gossip in the interludes of leisurely bargaining. A lady with a talent for speech and affairs gathers up all the news of the village and hands it over with the simple purchases, and tells her fellow-citizens just what ought to be done in the village.

Men in silk skirts, with scarfs tied like hair-ribbons around their heads, gather around her little stall, sitting on their heels, and idly nod assent over their cheroots, while she lays down the law. No soap-box for her. She keeps a perpetual open forum in her own house.

If her ambitions have a wider range, she takes a stall in the bazaar, and carries thither her commercial shrewdness and her lively tongue to play upon larger audiences. Sometimes she takes her husband or her father along, but in a subordinate capacity. A girl's father is expected to start her in her own career and her husband to help her to maintain it, but the rights, the profits, and the full directorship of it are hers; and a very considerable portion of the industrial and commercial enterprise of Burma is in the hands of women.

The day after my arrival I went into a cheroot factory. It was an extensive place, comprising several shacklike buildings—clean and orderly—where many girls were busy adroitly rolling the green leaves into long cigars. It seemed to be in charge of a man, who spoke English with an American accent, and had, he confessed, once lived in Chicago. We went through the plant asking many questions. At first he answered clearly enough. But finally he said: "I think I will have to refer you to my daughter. You know this is her factory, and she can tell you about it. I merely work with her." And when we were ushered into the presence of the real capitalist, the intellect whose brain had built up the business—we found a pretty little thing in a green silk petticoat, sitting on a table and smoking a cigar a foot long.

When a girl marries, she retains her business and her independent income. Probably, on the whole, Burmese women contribute more than the men to the maintenance of the household. The property that she brings

and her own earnings are guaranteed to her for her children. Her economic independence of her husband gives her freedom through all the range of her activity. Few strings are tied to Burmese femininity at any time. The girl arranges her own marriage, though not without the chaperonage and approval of her parents. Wooing is almost as free as it is in America. Often young people elope and, after a brief honeymoon in some jungly place, come back to be forgiven, like any foolish young folk, and are received with indulgence in the easy-going community. If a girl is not satisfied in her marriage, if her husband does not treat her fairly, she may go before the elders of the village and present her case, and obtain a release. There is no question of alimony. She has supported herself throughout. She simply takes her own property and goes, and the distribution of the children is arranged by arbitration and compromise to every one's satisfaction. But, despite this freedom of divorce, family life in Burma is perhaps more faithful and wholesome than in most Oriental lands, and the *Encyclopedia Britannica* solemnly records that "Burmese children are adored by their parents and are said to be the happiest and merriest children in the world."

If there are any objections to this simple form of feminism, they do not appear in Burma. Among the women the standard of health and literacy is higher than in India and China, and they contrive to be immensely gay and ornamental in the midst of their labours. Parading the streets on the way to the temple in the afternoon, in their fresh white silk jackets and bright silk petticoats and scarfs, laughing and flirting and expressing their opinions on all public matters as they pass by, often with a procession of black-eyed children in tow who are everybody's pets—they have captured the heart

of almost every white man who has come their way. Yet nowhere, perhaps, does the white man's casual way of taking to himself a temporary wife in the East work less hardship to the woman. In Burma she occupies a position too economically and socially secure to be easily wrecked.

Yet the questions of life that are so simple to her are a bit more disconcerting to the men who come from countries where women are more dependent.

To the Burmese girl the Englishman's reactions are somewhat complex. Of all the dusky ladies in his dominions, he likes her best. She is more like an Occidental woman, more interesting as a person. But perhaps on that very account, he often develops a conscience in dealing with her that she scarcely understands. I learned of one such, through a sensible little missionary woman who cited him as an example of moral problems that arise with the mingling of two cultures.

He was a nice, rosy English lad, just out from home, still conscious of his mother's prayers and admonitions, and determined upon the path of rectitude. One afternoon, amidst the flowers and candles of the pagoda, he caught the flirtatious glance of a dainty little saffron maid, and lingered, waiting for another such—and came next day for a repetition of the experience; and on the day following that stationed himself by the great alabaster Buddha where, in prostrating herself, she would be at his feet. When she saw him there, she moved to another place, but a blush burned on her brown bare neck and her eyes were shy and suffused beneath his glance. It had been her custom to leave early, before the twinkle of all the golden shrines went dead and cold in the twilight. But that day she lingered on, and when, one by one, the worshippers slipped away for the supper

hour, he moved to a place beside her, in the dim corner of the temple, where, for the moment, only the alabaster Buddha kept watch and even before his passionless, marble face her candle was now burning low. So they sat there on the marble floor, side by side. When she made a move as if to leave, the Englishman put out both arms in the dusk to hold her. "Dear little girl," he whispered in his own tongue, and found her throbbing and trembling in his arms.

But she was a good girl, honest and self-respecting, and she said it should be a marriage. Many Englishmen had married Burmese girls. When she spoke, he realized that it was not a ceremony binding on him, nor one recognized in his country. And dazzled, whispering to himself that he was still free—it merely satisfied her—yet troubled and feeling like a cad because he was deceiving her, he was recognized as her husband by the Burmese community. According to every law and custom of her native country she was now married. If they should wish to separate, it would be nothing to worry about. Divorce would be as simple as the wedding, and, with the gaiety of her land, she seized on the present, and went on with her commercial transactions in the bazaar, a joyous and contented woman. And when the first little son came, and his eyes were dark like hers, but his skin white, she was very happy indeed, for white skin is greatly valued in Burma.

Meanwhile the young Englishman was content enough with his wife. As such arrangements go in the East, it seemed all that could be desired. She was a busy and merry little thing, who looked clean and fresh in her gay silks, made few demands on him, and adapted herself readily to his customs. But always his conscience whispered that it was a lie. He was letting her be-

lieve herself married, when, by his law, there was no contract at all, and she could make no legal claim upon him. At last, though he knew that this had never been love as an Occidental hopes to know it, he came to the decision that he ought to marry her properly, with a church ceremony. When he told her this, as one making a great reparation, expecting gratitude for his self-sacrifice, she received the offer indifferently. Her own laws were quite good enough, she said. What did she want with his gods?

"But do you know that you are not really my wife? You are living as a ——"

"I know your vile English terms," she said, hotly. "I am faithful to you, and am your wife by my laws. That is enough."

"But suppose I go to England and marry there?"

"Then you go, and you and I are released—and before that, too, if you wish."

"But you can inherit none of my property."

"I have my own property."

"But the children?"

"If by your laws you are not my husband, then are they not mine, and I and my family may have them. And that is what I want most."

She was obdurate. She would have no English marriage. She was a free and self-supporting woman, and, fatherless or not, the children were worth all they cost her. But he was still very young and simple, and the teaching that good Christian parents must give their boys was still fresh in his heart and illustrated by little worldly experience. Somehow in his eyes there was a stain upon her. Sometimes he thought he did not deserve her, because he had established this little household under false pretences. At other times he could not but

think vulgarly of her for standing in this unhallowed relation to himself, and, in his harsh, bitter, self-accusing, religious moods, the Bible supplied him with a name to call her.

"I was his confidant," said the little American missionary who told me all this, "through all his torture of conscience."

"And what happened finally?"

"It is a difficult thing to tell and I know it only through gossip," she replied reluctantly, and then, with as much reserve as possible, detailed the facts. At last, driven to desperation by his own scruples, he had resigned her, telling her that it was for her own sake, that he was not "treating her right," all of which, of course, she did not understand. Hurt, vexed with what seemed to her the unnecessary misery he was making, she nevertheless accepted the separation with dignity, reflecting that at least the children—of whom there were now two—were worth the price. Her father was quite ready to fulfil all paternal duties to the little ones and to his house she returned. That, to her mind, was the end of it.

But that was not the end of it for him. He was young and hot-blooded, and the conscience he brought out from England was a misfit in this land—as much among his white companions as among the native girls. One night, when his moral sense was temporarily beaten down by whiskey and soda and the jests of his friends at dinner, and he was feeling much in need of a feminine creature, he had found his way to her—"just—just—as if she were a—a common woman," said the little missionary, coming to the point with difficulty.

"And then?"

"You understand. She had felt herself his wife

legally and in a decent way. Now, after a separation, for him to come to her addressing her like a prostitute—it was as much an insult as it would be to you or me. Well,”—she hesitated, and then went on. “There is no use going into further details. She and her kinsmen, by devious ways known to the Burmese when they are really aroused, managed to make it seem wisest to him to leave the town—and that is as much as I know. But her children are the brightest lads in these parts, and she is going to send them to an English college.”

CHAPTER XXXVI

CARUSO

MY researches into Burmese feminism were brought to an abrupt close by news of a sailing across the Bay of Bengal to India. Once more the scene shifted to the sea. In some respects that brief voyage of three days was the most adventurous of all the marine episodes of this tale.

In the first place my very presence on the ship proved to be a *faux pas*. Before I had been there an hour, the word went round that I was the only woman on board. The ship was buzzing. How would I act? Was I really a nice girl? One man, with more curiosity than manners, after plying me with compliments and questions which he believed to be camouflaged in sugar, looked me in the eyes and asked:

"How long have you been in the secret service of your country?"

"Oh, not long," said I, "not a year."

Some of my new shipmates were inclined to be sorry for me. I must be very embarrassed, they thought. Probably I would bashfully retire to my cabin for the duration of the voyage and eat my meals only in the safe company of myself. A really delicate-minded female does this now and then. Whenever I appeared, I could feel my face being scanned for blushes.

All this seemed a tempest in a teapot. Women had obviously travelled on this ship before, and there was every provision for their comfort and privacy. The British flag aloft was a guarantee that the conditions of a civilized state prevailed beneath it. The difficulty was

purely psychological. Had I not learned to pay no attention to purely psychological difficulties, I should not now be abroad in a womanless ship among the sharks and the flying-fish.

By evening I was a belle. I say this without apologies. No woman could have helped it. She might be fat, fifty, and homely, but if she were alone among white men who had not talked to a woman of their own colouring and speech for months, like many of the men on board, she would have felt as irresistible as Helen.

But, after all, it proved to be a false alarm. My "too distinguished onliness" lasted no longer than next morning. Then two other ladies were discovered aboard and elevated to a place on the throne. One was a humble little Salvation Army lass travelling third with the natives. She had blue eyes and a kind, pallid, worn little face. She was soon a sister to the whole ship, and had the freedom of first class. I think she darned not a few socks, and I know that she prayed for all of her adorers and with not a few of them. These ministrations were received with the touching reverence that greeted other feminine peculiarities on this ship.

The other was all that the Salvation Army lass was not. She was an Armenian flapper, not more than sixteen, travelling with her father, a rich and cultivated Armenian Jew. At first she was rather shy, but under the deluge of masculine attention she blossomed like a spring-flower beneath the first rains and queened it with gipsylike grace over the whole ship. Every trip around the deck, every whispered conference on the couch in the writing-room, every compliment and bow, brought new bloom to her cheeks and more stars into her eyes, and elicited a fresh ribbon and another bangle from some inexhaustible treasure-trove in her cabin.

By the time I discovered these my colleagues in sovereignty I was rather glad thus to be reinforced. An incident had happened which rather dampened my courage—but of this more anon.

The men among whom we queened it were typical of the groups one is likely to meet outside the big settlements in India. All of them were Englishmen. In appearance most of them were rather damaged by the light of a sun their skins were never made for, and were either lean, brown, and wrinkled, or rather flabby and florid. Several of them wore the military working uniform consisting of flannel shirt and "shorts." ("Shorts" are abbreviated trousers which leave the knees bare and are calculated to rob the wearer of every vestige of human and military dignity.) Some of them were younger sons with stray memories of university days still clinging about them and a taste for French novels. Some were salesmen who had been distributing typewriters and automobiles on the borders of civilization. Some were tea-planters from the big estates in the North. Some had been chasing *dacoits*—robbers and rebels—in the jungles of Burma. Some had been administering the justice of England from tent and horseback in the wilderness. Several of them had wives in England. Others were going to families in Calcutta. But most of them merely cherished some worn little photograph of a girl at home, and a reminiscent romance that bade fair never to materialize.

Among these lonely ones I soon became aware of a psychology common enough among the cowboys of the West or among the soldiers in the trenches but intensified and somewhat poisoned by the conditions of the tropics. It is the psychology of men who have long been denied any normal association with women—whose

natural interest in them has not been diffused as in civilized life in a multitude of casual contacts and affectionate responsibilities. Among exiles it is intensified by sheer homesickness. Even a rather disreputable fellow may learn, through the long days of loneliness on the prairie, the jungle, or the mountain-ridge, to enshrine his mother, his sisters, and the sweethearts of his early youth in adoring tenderness and respect. They may have been very commonplace little persons,—these heroines of his,—and had he lived among them, he would have found them so. But in the perspective of wistful memory they gather to themselves the charm of all that is denied and go haloed in sanctity and grace. The chivalry of the Americans has its origin in the psychology of the homeless frontier.

But loneliness does not turn men into saints. And a man who emerges from the desert or jungle for brief recuperation in the settlements—with a picture of some good woman perhaps enshrined like a saint in his heart—comes mostly with the determination to compound for long loneliness by deliberate license. The pressure of this intention is obvious under the oftentimes touching generosity with which these men pour out their hearts and their savings at the feet of the first woman who happens to cross their path.

The special malady of the womanless frontier was noticeable in two or three men on board the ship. One could recognize their somewhat abnormal mental state by the doglike way in which they picked up a few crumbs of a woman's favour, by their feverish interest in her dress and her looks and all that she did, and by their disposition to pour out all their hearts in confidences about their sweethearts, their past, and their most intimate modes of life. One of them—a nervous, brown, bashful

creature, who had sat by me in the brief fire of the tropical sunset and had told me about all the loves of his lifetime—came around after dinner to cancel his engagement to walk with me between nine and ten.

"I traded my date off to Caruso," he said. "Poor chap, he needs you even more than I do."

I am sorry to say that he took to whiskey and soda as a substitute. We met his unsteady shadow afterward in the darkness of the deck.

"You got the girl—nothing for me but whiskey," he said to Caruso. "Take care of her—goo' girl, goo' girl." And he went off staggering and murmuring into the night.

Caruso (so called because he could sing in a passionate and lyrical tenor that was strangely touching) was a huge fellow with the build of Hercules, a childlike face, and eager, ingenuous, suffering eyes. His wife had taken her two children to England for their education, and had no apparent intention of returning to him. I think she must have been one of those women who lose interest in a husband when they have children to divert their affection.

He had been spending four months alone on his tea-estates in Assam, with only the servants for company—part of that time beneath the black and storm-whipped sky of the terrible rainy season. His memories had fed on themselves, till he was like a man haunted by the dead, reduced to a helpless passion of self-pity.

When he came around to claim me for the evening stroll, he poured out the whole history of his life, just the story of any man's loves and hopes and disappointments, but full of details which one does not usually tell, except, perhaps, to whisper them into the ear of love. Loneliness and long silence had worn away the garment

of reticence with which we cover our naked souls. There was something almost uncanny in that intimate, passionate outpouring in the warm darkness. One by one the wandering shadows of men ceased to pass us on the deck. The throb of the ship, like the throbbing of some great heart, seemed to become steadier and more harmonious as we plunged onward through the shadows of the sea. Only a flying fish fluttered upward now and then from the waters and left a ripple and a sparkle in its wake. And still he talked on.

The centre of all his memories and imaginings was the eternal womanly. He told me of his mother, his sister, and his old home in Yorkshire. He told me about his boyhood sweethearts, of the first time he had kissed a girl, and how surprisingly sweet it had seemed. He told me, in adoring terms, of his wife in the days of their courtship; of the night she promised to marry him—a damp, moonless night, among the rainy roses of the old garden where neither of them should have been, for they were getting their feet very wet. She had a cold in consequence and would not see him for two days, because she said no woman could be charming when she had a cold. He told me about his marriage, and how he felt when his first baby was born. And always, like a melancholy refrain, he placed all experiences in time and space with the words, “When *she* was with me.” He told me how he dreamed of his wife—and often of strange kiddies and sweet girls whom he had never seen. But always they were blond-haired and fresh-faced and rosy, not like people in India. He felt maddened by the eternal sight of dark faces. Sometimes he would dream of his wife turning black before his very eyes, and awake in a sweat of horror.

“And when I saw you to-day,” he continued. “You

don't know how it all came back to me—my wife, you know, and my youth. I thought, 'God! but she looks like England!' "

There was something visionary and impersonal in his manner, and his words seemed to me like no private compliment. When I said good-night, he seemed scarcely to notice my going. But I was realizing, to my dismay, that it was midnight. I had not intended to walk so late. Every one had disappeared from the smoking-room and several pajamaed individuals were snoring on their blankets in the corners of the decks, after the custom on tropical ships.

So I fled down to my cabin, doing my best not to disturb any one's dreams. When I tried to lock my cabin door, the key would not turn in the lock. Here was a predicament. No one seemed to be abroad. There was not a cabin-boy in sight. I rang and rang, and got no response. Finally I thought cheerfully, "Well, I suppose I won't be kidnapped before morning," and stowed myself away on the upper bunk, without further negotiations with the recalcitrant key.

Suddenly I was awakened from a dream in which I seemed to be punching a man's face,—for no apparent reason,—to find some one standing in the middle of my cabin-floor. Some dim radiance from a light in the hall revealed Caruso. I did not know exactly how to open a social conversation with a man who had mysteriously appeared in my cabin at midnight. But I managed to gasp out an invitation to him to walk out. He paid no attention, and, I must confess, just as little apparent attention to me. There was something strange and fumbling and uncertain in his manner. I did not want to raise an alarm before I had to, though that would have been easy enough, for there were people in the

cabins all around me. The publicity would have been unpleasant. So I repeated my invitation to him to depart. He turned uncertainly toward the door, like a man acting under the command of a hypnotist. Just as he opened the door, he seemed suddenly to come to.

"My God," he said, "will you ever forgive me?"

"There will be no forgiveness," I answered sharply, "till you are on the other side of that door."

He slipped out without another word.

Next morning Caruso did not come to breakfast. I encountered him accidentally in the writing-room, where he was lying on the couch, pale and haggard. He immediately poured forth a somewhat incoherent explanation and apology.

"You know how it is," he said, "your cabin is exactly parallel to mine, but on the other side of the ship. And when I went down from the decks, I had got turned around, and was going up the wrong corridor. I touched your door, thinking it was my own, and it gave under my hand and then—and then, I saw you. You never will understand the rest. It was only a look I wanted—I swear it; there was nothing in my mind that you could resent. But oh! it was a sight I was starved for—you, you good, pure girl asleep, and all your little womanly things about the place. You don't understand. It was only a look. I thought you would never know."

"Nevertheless," I answered, "it was an unwarranted intrusion."

He continued to explain and plead for pardon. At last I said: "It is not that I do not 'forgive' you. It is only that nothing can immediately restore the sense of ease and pleasure that I had in your company yesterday. That's the sort of consequence one can only live down."

"I'll do it. By heaven, I'll do it," he said, and fell at

once into cheerful impersonal talk, as if he were determined to show me he was not an hysterical fool after all. Diverted from his own obsession, his speech was entertaining and well informed. But, over-estimating his renewed strength of mind, he asked me, cheerfully enough, whether I was not betrothed.

"Yes," I answered.

He said nothing. In the momentary embarrassment that came with his sudden silence, I pleaded some small excuse and rose to go. He clutched my dress. "Remember me when you go to your own great happiness," he said, and turned suddenly away. His shoulders were shaking with sobs, and he was weeping, with a great gush of tears, as a woman weeps.

Thereafter our relations were confined to the most distant formalities of ship-board; and he did not come within conversing distance of me at any time. On the dock at Calcutta, he approached me and, offering his hand, said good-bye like the merest acquaintance. Nor did he ever cross my path again.

* * * * *

Two days afterward we sailed up the muddy stream of the Hoogly River to Calcutta, in the late afternoon, and from the events of the next twenty-four hours I date another stage in my story.

BOOK FIVE



CHAPTER XXXVII

PEACE

CALCUTTA is the Book of Snobs writ large. Only an Anglo-Saxon people could make such an ugly city. Only in the tropics will a city so slack and so corrupt be found. And yet there is a certain pathos about it, the pathos of men preserving face under discouraging conditions. From the sunburned grass which tries so ineffectually to imitate the turfy lawns of England to the somewhat tawdry social adventure of Peliti's, there is everywhere the poor bravery of an attempt to make London and London society in the wilderness.

The city stretches for miles, a jungle of dingy buildings on a dingy plain. The streets are thronged with a hopeless race of black men and a damaged race of white men. The black men have a draped and turbaned dignity, and what looks like the sorrow of ten thousand years in their eyes. They do not blossom in the gaiety of purple and fine linen or wear festive petticoats like the merry Burmese. They are a drab race and wear a drab costume.

Strange this impression of sordid tragedy which Calcutta made upon me on my landing that afternoon in November, and from which I never wholly recovered, for I entered at a moment when all the world was ready to flash forth into a great rejoicing. It being too late to make connections with any one that day, I went lonesomely and forlornly to a hotel to wait till morning. Even before I had disentangled myself from all the small

nuisances of landing, the vast and terrible night of India fell like a pall over the city. An acrid smoke veiled the stars and mingled with feverish mists. It was the smoke of burning human flesh, for the scourge of influenza was abroad in the land, and the fires of the native crematories reddened the night. In every doorway and alley the leprosied outcast hordes, who beg by day and dwell nowhere, lay wrapped in their white blankets and slept like the sheeted dead.

As the hours drew toward midnight gharries and taxicabs went by, full of flushed and giggling English women and incoherent men returning from late dinners. The whole city was on a spree. Everywhere there was a stir and hope. Men boasted vaguely over their cups. The war was ending. There seemed to be no authentic information to that effect. Yet everywhere there was the intuition.

I dared not hope. There seemed something almost sinister in the universal drunkenness of that night, as if it were the prelude to some disaster. So I went to sleep, feeling alone and strange in this new land, and very far from all that I loved. Suddenly a vague horror enwrapped me like a nightmare. I awoke, startled, terrified. The stone walls of the hotel were vibrating to a wild outcry of music, squeaking, whining, throbbing, rejoicing. There were drums and instruments of torturing melody. Without, in the darkness I heard cheers, violent drunken cheers nearby, faint cheers far off. All over the city the lights flared. And still that barbarous crash of European and Indian instruments in the hands of some annunciatory procession of inebriate Englishmen and ragamuffin natives marching.

Bizarre as was that outcry upon the feverish, smoke-laden night, I understood. This, then, was peace. So

strangely, in a form so crude and melancholy, did the great annunciation come to me, alone, on that first night in a far-off land. Yet so wholly had my own private life been merged with that of multitudes of people for months, since I had left Japan, that my first thought was not of the liberty that this gave to my own little love. I thought how terrible must be this drunken mirth in the ears of those to whom peace would never bring back their dead.

Afterwards I lay awake till morning, through all the shrieking night, till the dawn came up over a dusty palm tree—a glad and quiet sense of release growing upon me. There was no shadow now behind that wedding day in January, and no more puzzle and uncertainty. It seemed to me that I could scarcely wait for the sailing of the ship that was to take me back over the paths I had just traversed.

Next morning Calcutta looked like a man who has suddenly come into a fortune and does not know what to do with it. The Englishman, so game in disaster, is helpless in felicity, abashed, awkward, inarticulate. The Indians felt shy, like poor relations in the house of rejoicing. Only a few wealthy and princely Hindus rose to the occasion with an aplomb of which the Briton is not master, and distributed congratulatory gifts.

Almost immediately after my ten o'clock breakfast, while I was wondering how to attack this great land, the cards of some callers came to me. Callers for me! How could any one know that I was in India! When I went down, I found a nice boy in white duck and the prettiest lady in India, whom I must describe in terms of later knowledge because they have since become so dear to me that I can scarcely remember how it seemed to meet them as strangers. They were friends of Syd-

ney's, and, though no word from him had come to me since my cable to him from the Philippines, they had heard from him of my coming and had been sent to take charge of my destinies in his stead. Herbert and Beatrice I will call them, for want of better names. Herbert was merely a nice boy who had gone to Yale and had not yet recovered from it. Nor had he recovered from amazement at finding himself really the husband of Beatrice. This was only natural, for Beatrice was not the sort of wife that a man acquires every day.

Almost every land had gone into the making of her, and a complex and cosmopolitan bit of witchery was the result. She had the beauty that one sees in old Italian paintings, not indeed in the sweetness of the placid and substantial Madonnas of Raphael, but in those naughty boy angels of Correggio who skate through Heaven on clouds and meditate mischief under the very eyes of the Eternal Father. Her skin had the smoothness and lustre of a white rose and her eyes were of an almost flowerlike blueness. There was in them, behind a glint of sheer fun, a shadow of sadness, pathetic and haunting. Some admirer had once written a poem about her in which he spoke of her as one

Whose soul is ages, ages old,
Behind those dreamy eyes.

Her hair was black and massy—without gloss or any brightness—and seemed to drink in the light like black velvet. It surrounded her chiselled, wilful, blossom-tinted face with a kind of halo of darkness.

People usually took her for an exotic American type. But she was by birth Italian, of proud and ancient lineage. She had nothing in common with the swarthy

Madonnas of our little Italies. She was one of those in whom the old Roman blood had been touched to fervour and to brightness by some dash of the Goth. The daughter of a noted archæologist, she had first opened her blue eyes on the deserts of Egypt, where her father was unearthing scarabs and forgotten lore, and had acquired her first knowledge of life from a bag swung from the back of a camel. Most of her childhood she had spent between acquiring tom-boy tricks and an instinct of good sportsmanship in vacations in England, and being turned out a finished little French maid in Paris. She could not tell whether Italian, French, or English was really her native tongue, for she had spoken all three since babyhood, in accents of pure and lingering sweetness.

At seventeen she had come to live with a rich aunt in New Haven and had promptly become an imitation of an American girl and a college belle. She had chosen Herbert from a cosmopolitan collection of lovers because he had had the nerve to rid her of an unwelcome Russian count by announcing himself as her fiancé. She had never considered him in exactly that light, but she rewarded his brass by living up to the assumption. A series of complications ensued. Her European relatives, who had counted on her beauty, accomplishments, and breeding to win her a prince or at least a plutocrat, felt that she had married beneath her. His good old parents, in a Massachusetts village, could only feel that he had been taken in by "that foreign woman" who was no doubt papistical or otherwise heathen. They prayed for him at family devotions, inquired into the status of his church attendance after marriage, and hoped that she did not smoke cigarettes.

They had escaped from these social problems by eloping to India, where Herbert acquired all the privileges

of selling typewriters on the borders of civilization. Even in India the brilliant and high-bred girl sometimes found herself face to face with the vulgar Anglo-Saxon prejudice against the foreigner. She liked to announce with an air of confessing a shady past: "Do you know what I am? I am a *dago*."

Once an Englishwoman, learning that she was Italian and not American, as was usually supposed, bustled up to her with kindness and compromise beaming in her honest plebeian face:

"You know," she said, "I don't really mind foreigners."

"I am sorry," said Beatrice, "but I do."

Under their direction my plans took shape at once. Beatrice it seems had been wishing for a companion in a little trip among the cities of the North. Would I not come with her? Herbert supported her suggestion with an offer of his trusty servant Abdul as escort, a schedule of railroad trains and hostelries, and introductions to every one, from missionaries to rajahs. So, in a flash, it was all decided, and we would start day after to-morrow.

But as they arose to go, Herbert said, "Have you made all arrangements for your return sailing? Sydney will never forgive us if we don't pack you off in time."

"Yes," I said, mentioning the date of departure late in December.

He looked a little troubled. "You know this armistice is likely to change all sailing arrangements."

"But not to Japan."

"That's just what I am afraid of. They're likely to turn all the boats going that way around, and send them through the Suez Canal. And they are still more likely to say that Americans who are mere private citizens cannot get accommodations on any ship till the official British

who have been stranded here for years have an opportunity to get home. You might as well begin to resign yourself to staying in India a year."

For a moment I touched the bottom-most depths of despair. Then my hopes shot up again like an empty bucket.

"Nevertheless," I said, "I won't postpone my wedding day."

"I hope not," he answered. "And if you will give me the permission and all necessary data, I'll do my best to make arrangements to get you out of India, while you and Beatrice are breaking hearts in northern India."

So it was settled, and Beatrice, seeing how troubled I still was, applied such magic of hope and such sweetness of confirmatory description to my accounts of Sydney, that the pure contentment that the news of the armistice had brought into the dawning of that day returned with double gladness.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

LADIES OF THE ZENANA

THAT afternoon, feeling venturesome and elated after this fortunate morning, I went to call on a missionary, for missionaries are always the door to knowledge of that obscure, undifferentiated, inglorious life that underlies all Oriental splendour like dirt beneath one's feet. I said that I wished to know of the life of Indian women, and almost immediately an excursion with a zenana missionary was arranged. It was not to be an evangelical tour, but just a social call.

The zenana is the woman's quarter of the Hindu household, where the wives live "behind the veil," invisible to all except the husband. Though the Hindu is, in most cases, monagamous, whatever extra privileges of concubinage he may permit himself, the household is of the same patriarchal type that prevails in China. The wives of the sons, and sometimes of the sons' sons, are brought, as little girls, to live in the house of the parents, under the rule of the mother-in-law. But what the Chinese obtains by foot-binding in the limitation of free motion among his women folk, the Hindu obtains by the "purdah" or veil. The word is not merely the term for the drapery which hides the woman's face from every man but her lord, even from her father-in-law, and her brothers. It is a symbol of a most rigorous system of seclusion which keeps the woman practically gaoled within her own quarters. Like the Turkish harem, the *zenana* is the centre of mystery to the white man, and even to the white woman in the Orient, and few are those

who win the confidence of the proprietors of its concealed treasures sufficiently to make social intercourse possible.

The particular *zenana* from which this invitation emanated was a highly "advanced" place. Not that the veiled beings who dwelt there had any education or had ever looked beyond the iron bars of their own balconies! They had not. Only once, for a few months of intoxicating freedom, one of them had gone to a mission school. From behind her *purdah*, seated in a balcony by herself where she would not be contaminated, she had heard the manlike wisdom and witnessed the manlike freedom of the genuinely Christian girls. Forever afterward this experience had served as a topic of conversation among her scandalized sisters-in-law. The mission named her Minerva because she was the source of all wisdom in the *zenanas*.

The peculiarity of the *zenana* which we were invited to visit was that the mother, being a lady of strong will, and having no sons and considerable money, had been able to get her sons-in-law to come to her house instead of sending her daughters to theirs. Hence the daughters, being under their own mother's roof, contrived to enjoy a special measure of freedom and happiness. The peculiar advantages of this system became obvious when the husband of one of the daughters died without leaving children. According to Hindu law her personal life had died with her husband. She would remain simply as a drudge in the house of her mother-in-law—joyless, despised. But among her own sisters, under the jurisdiction of her mother, the lot of the young widow was softened by affection.

Like other dwelling-places of the rich in India, the mansion we were to visit concealed its magnificence

from the public as carefully as an Oriental hides the beauty of his wife. After roaming among some ill-smelling mud-hovels, we suddenly issued into a cool and brilliant courtyard. It was brightly paved with mosaics and surrounded by gay pillars and balconies. In the middle of the court a fountain was playing.

A servant dumbly indicated that we were to ascend to the upper regions. Climbing some narrow, uncomfortable stone steps, we came out into stone courts above. Minerva ran to greet us, vivaciously throwing back her veil from her head and bare shoulders and touching our hands to show that she had no Brahminical fear of contamination. The widow followed. She placidly smiled a greeting, but did not come near enough to risk an accidental contact. Her subdued mien and ash-coloured garments indicated her lot in the household.

The others followed more shyly. With a soft fall of bare feet and tinkle of anklets, with a fluttering of gorgeous chiffonlike materials of rose and mauve and green, they stole in one by one and bashfully coquetted with us around the edge of their *saris*. Then there came a thud and scraping on the floor, and the babies appeared. There were about a million of them—odd, dusky, unhealthy little creatures clothed only in necklaces, bracelets, and anklets, with great painted eyes.

Minerva undertook the guidance of the conversation. Was it true that there was peace? she demanded. We asked her how she had heard about it. She said there was a whisper about it among the men. She had extracted something about it from her husband. The *zenana* exists on information extracted from husbands. Every wife gets what she can out of her own spouse, and, when their lords are out of sight, they all gather together and pool their data and make plans for concerted



Courtesy Foreign Missions Library, 156 Fifth Ave., N. Y.

She had heard the manlike wisdom and witnessed the manlike freedom of the
genuinely Christian girls



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Only an Anglo-Saxon people could make such an ugly city

action. The result is sometimes a degree of feminine influence in masculine lives which would horrify the husbands of our feminist lands. I have heard the British adviser to one of the most powerful of the Indian princes say that the *zenana* is the curse of Indian politics. Lack of knowledge of the problems of men in the world makes for no diminution in the feminine wish to rule the destinies of husband and son. In the case of our hostesses, their knowledge of the war, though gory and romantic, proved to be amazingly full. Yet I thought that surely they must be using terms parrotlike, for what images could much that they talked of convey to women who had never been outside their own courts?

Suddenly a hush fell over the group. Each girl composed her *sari* and rescued her children from mischief. This meant that the mother-in-law, whom the missionary called the "Easy Boss," was coming. The Easy Boss was a mighty old woman with great manlike limbs and a masculine face. Unlike the younger women she did not crouch on the floor. She sat on a stool, with her legs crossed and the air of a councillor of state. She spoke about the war in a tone of firmness and authority. Yes, she said, it was well that the war was ended. Now the prices would be better and one need not live in daily fear of robbery.

Was she afraid lest the war should rob her? we asked.

She answered: A long war meant heavy taxes. The longer the war, the heavier the tax. In the end the British would have been obliged to come and take away all their wealth. But she had prepared for that; they couldn't get hers.

After having done the honours for us, she left us in order to hold the ceremony of family worship. We persuaded her to let us see her gods. They were a collection

of misshapen, gaudily painted images in an upper room. She spoke of religion with a certain materialism and tolerance. Like the family and the family wealth, religion was an institution to be supported. She talked like some prosperous old deacon and was as perfect a bourgeois type as I have ever seen.

The minute the Easy Boss was safely occupied with the gods, a buzz of frivolous chatter rose between the *zenana* and us. It was regular woman's talk, all about clothes, babies, and household matters. They showed us their collections of gowns or *saris*, a marvellous array of delicate silk and gold embroidery, and we explained how our clothes were put together. Their jewelry they could not show us. I persisted. Why couldn't we see their jewelry? Had not India been the land of gems from the beginning of time? I wanted to see the jewelled ladies behind the veil, in full regalia. At last Minerva confessed: Mother had sold their jewels. She said if the war continued much longer, the British might take them for taxes. So she had sold all the gems and other valuables, and with the money she had bought land. "No one," she had said triumphantly, "could carry away the land!" This, then, was her secret, her method of outwitting the government!

To me the life of these women seemed pathetic. Married at twelve, denied all normal work and exercise, living in a continual state of negligée, cut off from the outside world—how could they be well or happy? They certainly did not look well. Most of them were sallow and anemic; some—not the vivacious daughters of the house, but acquired sisters-in-law of other branches of the family—were fat and sensual. Grace, gentleness, and naïveté they all had, and a soft and pretty desire to please. They were like sleek pets, as lovable and, except for the

function of motherhood, as important in life as kittens.

I soon discovered that my pity for them was nothing in comparison with their pity for me. What a great, ugly, faded thing I was, to be sure! My hair was so rough and my clothes so *mal apropos*, and I wore a strange structure on my head and covered my feet with a substance so ugly and so thick it was a wonder I could walk.

I even confessed that I had no husband. Then their pity knew no bounds. What sort of monster was I that my parents had never been able to find me a husband! Didn't we have husbands in the country that I came from!

Finally my companion, lifting my ringed finger, said playfully that I should soon have a husband. The news was communicated from one to the other. They broke into little congratulatory sounds and flutterings, and gathered around me like pretty birds, with brightened eyes and self-conscious blushes, to know all about it. How did we manage such things in our country? Had I really seen him already? What! I knew him very well. How strange! It did not seem to them quite proper. And the ring! Only men wore rings, according to their notion. They wanted to go farther. They were trying to imagine the intimacies of married life as obtaining between creatures who struck them as being monstrous and unnatural in all their ways. But bashfulness checked their inquiries. Yet between us there was now a common basis of humanity—that mysterious current of womanly kindness which has its source in the great elemental cares and triumphs and adventures of womanhood. And when I left, they crowded around me and wished me happiness as sincerely and kindly as if they were my own sisters.

CHAPTER XXXIX

A GUEST OF TAGORE AT SHANTINIKETAN

THE railroad station in Calcutta gives little sign of the pageantry of cities that lies beyond—Benares, Allahabad, Agra—names sweet and strange on the tongue, and beautiful with the decadent beauty of the East. It was strictly on faith that Beatrice and I set forth to spy out their secrets on that sultry November morning, with romance in our hearts and good honest chicken sandwiches under our arms. Beatrice, I believe, still hoped to find some abode of “mysticism,” and read all the secrets of human life and the darkness that environs it in some wizard’s crystal or the blaze of the desert stars. During six months in Calcutta she had not yet unlearned that knowledge of India which one acquires in San Francisco and Greenwich Village. I was more sceptical, yet not without a sense of the dramatic in our expedition. I was carrying to Sir Rabindranath Tagore a copy of the newspaper containing the terms of the armistice. It was interesting to bring the documentary evidence of one of the supreme crises in history into the retreat of poetry in the desert.

So we looked around on that railroad station with eyes still dazzled with the incorrigible romance that youth and much reading bring to the Orient. And faith, the prospect needed such spiritual illumination! The station had none of the sweep of line and depth of space which lend majesty to great American ter-

minals. It was dirty and frowsy and overgrown. The trains puffed in fussily and ambled away without dignity. The waiting hordes, with all their worldly goods tied up in dirty linen, were scarcely more picturesque than Italian immigrants or gipsies on the march. Here and there a figure stood out in brilliant relief. An old Kashmiri, with eyes as blue as the lakes of Ireland, had seated himself on a rug and spread out the treasures of his mountain vale before him—inlaid turquoise, coloured embroideries that had the radiance and sheen of stained glass, and woolen shawls which were like snowflakes. Nearby an Afghan in baggy trousers and spangled dress was sharpening a knife. A creature all masked in white like a Ku Klux rider was spirited past. This was a high-born Moslem lady. She would be seated alone in a first-class compartment, and would travel uncontaminated by the gaze of men.

Meanwhile Abdul presided over our baggage and sundry savouries in the way of lunch with all the dignity of a sultan. He was a stately creature with regular, haughty features and great dark eyes which looked out on the world with the gaze of one who has learned all the secrets of life, and has found it, not good indeed, but not so bad as it might be. Around his head were wound folds upon folds of white linen in a turban which was a marvel of architectural ingenuity. But he wore a natty tweed suit, pleated and belted, which once was Herbert's and had an indefinable air of New Haven about it, and his feet were shod with yellow Oxfords which were also graduates of Yale. To Herbert, his young sahib, Abdul was already deeply and abjectly devoted with the devotion that only the heart of an Indian servant knows. Beatrice and me he merely tolerated; but we were his sahib's property and as such were sacred in his eyes.

Herbert knew that, when that first-class carriage pulled out, bearing us into all the adventures and dangers of the great land that is India, we could have no better guardian.

From nine in the morning to three in the afternoon that little train rattled away with us into depths of dust and sunshine and scenic emptiness. Outside of the windows there was nothing to see, just unending reaches of sun-burned earth that melted at last into the white emptiness of sunshine on the horizon. Now and then we pulled up with a jerk at a little railway station, and dark Bengalis in white draperies came listlessly out and looked at us, while some one more officially clad announced through the window that we could here obtain *cha*. *Cha* is vile black tea which one consumes in unlimited quantities on these dusty journeys in lieu of water together with stodgy toast and buffalo butter,—unless, perchance, one adopts the really orthodox beverage and, as the day wears on, becomes mildly soused in whiskey and soda.

About three we were suddenly tumbled off into the heart of silence and an infinity of shining space. The train pulled off, leaving for a moment a little ripple of sound and a stain of smoke in that great peace and brightness. We stood, we two, alone in the desert. Not wholly alone—we discovered! A woman in a faded red *sari* looked dreamily at us and went on polishing a brass bowl in the dust. A naked brown baby—all dirt and creases and dimples—suddenly rolled out from nowhere and sat blinking at us. A cow appeared and swished her tail. Then a voice broke upon this mute survey.

“You are guests of the Poet, I believe,” said some one in English accents, and we looked into the thin, sun-

burned face and kind blue eyes of an Englishman clad in flowing Indian draperies which flapped uneasily about his restless Occidental figure.

"The Poet has sent me to greet you. I am Mr. Andrews." "Ex-Anglican, reformer and subject of a flattering dedication by Tagore," my memory immediately supplied. He produced a rattling box set on four wheels and drawn by a somnambulant animal, and invited us to enter. We doubled ourselves up like jackknives inside. The beast slowly set itself in motion, and we started down a dusty road bordered with the only vegetation in sight, in the shape of dusty trees, the shadow of whose foliage was outlined like lace in the golden dust of the highway. Beyond, the infinity of land lay naked in the sunshine. Only a little stream, without currents or waves, shone blue between sandy banks, and palms were mirrored in it. To my eyes it was indeed a desert; and thinking, for a moment, in terms of the grass and flowers and tumbling brooks and blue hills of my own land, I saw no beauty there. But I soon found in it the pervading and interpreting spirit of a poet's love. For Mr. Andrews kept stopping every few minutes to point out some secret attraction—the changing tawny light upon the tawny earth, perhaps, or the vista of dusty trees outlined in shadow on the road, or, best of all, the poet's favourite view, where the blue water of the oasis shone for a moment, between spires of desert grass. And as he spoke, Beatrice's eyes brightened till they outshone the very sunshine.

"It is Egypt again," she cried. "Oh, there is nothing so beautiful in all the world!"

Then something of the sober and subtle loveliness took possession of me too, and I began to feel that against the pure austerity and dignity of that vast blaze of earth

and light there is something vulgar and sensual in the common prettiness and fertility of our western fields.

We came at last to a group of thatched adobe bungalows set among scrubby trees. Here we abandoned the *ekka* and the somnambulant beast and struck into a stony trail across the fields. This led to a bungalow quite detached from the rest, perhaps a quarter of a mile from them, which, Mr. Andrews told us, we were to have all to ourselves during our stay. We found it a primitive dwelling, much like a simple summer cottage in our own country, consisting of two rooms. One was furnished as a dining-room with table, chairs, and side-board; the other was furnished with two beds covered with bright red blankets, and a table on which the thoughtfulness of our host had laid out all the latest American magazines—magazines which I had not been able to see since I left Japan, but which had come through to him by mail.

“If you will make yourselves at home here,” said Mr. Andrews kindly, “I will see that some tea is sent to you, and afterwards the Poet himself will come to pay his respects.”

And he left us to our own society and the joys of a great splash in cold water.

It was with a delightful sense of proprietorship and homelikeness that we took possession of that little house set out there alone in the empty sunshine in the heart of this strange land. It was almost like the first moments of camping out, and vaguely reminded us of other days and other experiences in our home-land now so far away. All the travelling I have ever done has been greatly sweetened by my early summers in some little shack in the woods. For life reduced to its elementals is much the same the world over, and the peculiar joys of cold water

and the taste of bread to one hungry with exercise and fresh air know no country or civilization. Again and again, in the days of house-boating in China, on the slopes of Fujiyama, in the mountains of Spain, I have returned to the barest roof over my head or perhaps only the empty sky, and to food that consisted of bread or rice and fruit—have returned with a certain intimacy of pleasure, a kind of home-coming to physical sensation which is always the same, and which links experience with experience the world around. It was with a pleasure and exhilaration of old association that I fell into the austere and frugal ways of Shantiniketan and that little adobe shack.

As soon as we had investigated the cold water and the magazines, a boy came scurrying across the fields with *cha* and bananas. The *cha* had somewhat cooled in transit, but it was still refreshing as fairy wine to girls tired yet eager to find all things romantic. The tea was followed by Mr. Andrews, who had carried off the newspaper to the Poet. He was full of talk about the armistice.

As we were speaking, Mr. Andrews looked out and said:

“The Poet is coming.”

We looked out across the fields. I don't know whether it was the late sunlight, now growing so golden, or some fancy of my own, but he whom we saw seemed for a moment a being of visionary majesty and beauty. Tagore is at all times a remarkable figure, but those who saw him in America saw him transplanted, out of his element, in contrast with a world too unlike him to make his peculiar charm and distinction seem ought but exotic and even bizarre. But on that golden afternoon, against his own desert background, he seemed the very

incarnation and spirit of the austere and spacious land. Clad in blue-grey robes,—not the usual Bengali costume, but a kind of modification of the Japanese kimono made full and flowing,—backed and haloed by the sunshine, his tall, graceful figure moved toward us like that of a saint. So Christ must sometimes have appeared to his disciples, gathering some visionary beauty from accidents of light and space.

Then the vision fled, and a tall man, with peculiarly sweet bright brown eyes, was shaking hands with us with American ease, and inquiring after friends he knew in the United States. The talk fell into quite ordinary channels. Yes, he loved America best of all Occidental lands, though every one there was in a hurry, and the sunshine at its brightest seemed to him like cold grey mist, yet certainly not so cold or so grey as the dreary sunshine of northern Europe. He remembered Nashville and his visits in the South with peculiar pleasure. Southerners were more like the people of India, more leisurely, less serious and hurried. Next to some places in the South he loved best our college towns. He had been very happy in Urbana, Illinois. But our great cities—and he dropped the discussion of these monstrosities with a slight expressive gesture.

He thanked us for the paper about the armistice; the news would not have come through to him so soon otherwise. But he was unwilling to talk politics. As one under the suspicion of the British government, because of his devotion to the liberties of India, he seemed to think silence the better part of discretion. Those who have known Tagore only on parade in America, heralded as a mystic by a zealous lecture agent, and the prey of adoring ladies, can hardly appreciate the natural charm of the man in his own surroundings, nor his play-

fulness and grace. He has been wronged by the emphasis on his esoteric wisdom, and continually put in a false position among us, because he does not understand the best in us, nor we the best in him. So foolish people have adored him falsely, and those whom he should meet have been alienated. Could he have come as a simple man among us, with no publishing of peculiarities which are rather racial than personal, could he have talked to frugal, writing, reading folk—professors and scholars—in quiet places, we should have felt a life-giving contact with him which would have been, perhaps, the most wholesome of all possible relations between the East and the West.

As it is, people in America who should be above such provincialism have declared him a *poseur* simply because his ways and modes of speech were not theirs, and have accounted hypocrisy in him what would be hypocrisy in themselves. To this has been added the propaganda of the British government that has a quarrel with him which we need not share, and which is no more discreditable to him than the career of George Washington is to America. Tagore is not a saint that we should worship him, nor a messenger from the unknown to reveal to us the secrets beyond death and our daily life. To call him a mystic in a sense wrongs him, for to India a mystic is only what a scholar is to us, a thoughtful person who is learning of life as much as he can. But he is a poet, with the poet's freshness of heart and magic of intuition, and whatever deductions we may make from the sum-total of what is called his philosophy, he remains, I think, the greatest poetic personality of our age.

Something of this I am thinking as I talked to him then, and the impression was later confirmed in his re-

cent visit to America. While we were conversing, the sun had come near to the horizon. "Will you not walk with me?" he said. "You will find it not unpleasant now."

We stepped out. The glare and the dust had vanished, and the world lay purely golden in the vast and gentle radiance of the descending sun. A coolness was coming into the air which made it fresh as mountain water, and the silence, the utter soundlessness of the desert space environed us in solemn peace. Our talk turned from the gossip of our first encounter to subjects that seemed more in spirit with the hour.

"When I was a little girl," Beatrice remarked, "the horizon always fascinated me. I thought, if I could keep on walking and walking until I reached it, I should come to the jumping-off place and look over the edge of the world into space."

The Poet smiled. "I think every child in the world has had that thought," he said. "I like the thoughts of children—they are often very beautiful. That is why I love to have them with me here at Shantiniketan."

And he went on to tell us of his own little school and of the history of this retreat. His father, a notable teacher and mystic, had chosen this lonely spot as a place to which he might retire for rest and meditation when, in the flurry of the world and overmuch struggle with difficulties, both religious and practical, he felt that he was losing the vision that sustained him. He had planted the trees and had built here a house and a little chapel. And here his sons had learned that they too might come to cool the fever of their souls in the presence of silence and the stars.

Later, when the Poet began to think of education and the future of the youth of his own land, tempted as they

are to forget the purest traditions of Indian faith and culture in devotion to the science and machinery of the West, it had occurred to him that he might revive a beautiful and ancient institution of his country—the forest school.

This ideal the Poet had tried to adapt to modern Indian life. He had gathered at Shantiniketan a group of boys with whom he shared his studies, his thoughts, and the making of his poetry. They received all due instruction in Western learning at the hands of competent teachers like Mr. Andrews, and were prepared to enter the government universities. But outside of this necessary curriculum they tried to reproduce the ancient simplicity and naturalness in the relation of teacher and student in the out-of-door life stripped of all but essentials. Each boy followed his own bent, whether for music or art or literature or science. There was all the healthy play they wished, for he felt that in his own case and in that of most high-bred and well-to-do Indian boys, something of the pure joy of living had been lost to them by the fact that they were too civilized to run about and tumble into the dust and water when they pleased. So they had missed the joys of physical sensation and even of mischievous enterprise which poor boys the world over enjoy.

At the same time he welcomed all the fresh imagination of childhood in the making of his own poetry. When he finished a poem he would sing it to the boys while it was still in its first bloom—for the poems which we know only in prose translations are, in the original, songs set to lovely and haunting music of Bengal. The children would come in crowds to hear the singing, and would learn them and sing them, too, gathering in groups to sing under the open sky on moonlit nights, or

in the shadows of the lowering rain-clouds of July. Sometimes they would act out little plays which the poet wrote, or would become ambitious and write poetry in imitation of his and sing it to each other. To-morrow he would show us the pictures for the very simple stage-sets that they used when they gave *The Cycle of Spring* with the Poet himself as an actor.

The Poet broke off his explanation of Shantiniketan to point out a group of his young mystics. They were not worshipping the beauty of the declining sun, nor yet singing in groups beneath the shining sky. They were playing football and yelling like anything but proper young Brahmins, and, as they played, the dust that they kicked up turned golden around them in the sunshine, and each lively figure moved in its own halo of light.

Even as we looked, the sun touched the horizon, and almost immediately the shadow of night moved up the sky, touching us with the awe which this unheralded intrusion of the tropical darkness into the very midst of daylight inevitably brings. As we turned to walk homeward, we could see our house only by the flickering of a candle which Abdul must have lighted, and the great stars were flaming on all the horizons around us. Beatrice asked the Poet whether he had faith in the science of astrology which is everywhere believed in India. Could one really read the secrets of life in the stars? The Poet answered in a tone of placid tolerance:

"I am still waiting for a demonstration. How can I tell what may be done among the stars? They look so wise that one might fancy that they know all about us."

Still in pursuit of the secrets of Indian mysticism, Beatrice asked whether it was really true that he always took an hour of meditation at night on an upper balcony under the stars. He answered lightly that he loved

the stars and meditated much at all times on that upper balcony. More soberly he admitted that to take some little time during the day to be simply quiet, to abstract the mind from all earthly worries and cares, and think, if one thinks at all, only of the ultimate end and meaning of life, is the source of mental and spiritual poise—a bath and balm for the soul.

Then, dropping the serious tone, he spoke with some amusement of the good ladies in America who had come to him for instruction in mysticism.

“What could I teach them?” he said half deprecatingly. “They did not want to hear what I could really tell them. It was too simple and obvious, not wonderful and mysterious enough.”

With such speech between us, we came to a parting of the trails. The Poet turned away to a dim glow of light which marked his own house, and we followed the beckoning flame of Abdul’s candle to our own bungalow.

CHAPTER XL

CHOTA HAZRI

A FEW minutes later dinner arrived by messenger across the fields, and was served by Abdul in the dim circle of light made by a small oil lamp. Abdul was disdainful, though silent. He could not see why his memsahibs had chosen to come to such an empty hole. Primitive simplicity and mysticism had no charms for him.

Out of deference to us the dinner consisted of the usual meat courses of an English meal, though, in accordance with the best Indian usage, diet is vegetarian at Shantiniketan. I must confess that we felt a little ashamed of our fleshly tastes. It suddenly seemed vulgar to be carnivorous.

As Beatrice and I sat there, looking into each other's faces in that dim circle of light environed in darkness, alone in our little house, we suddenly felt a great strangeness and loneliness. Our hosts seemed to us alien and far away. We could barely discern the glow of the Poet's house in the distance. Outside there was only darkness and silence and a million stars. Beatrice moved her chair nearer to mine and squeezed my hand under the table-cloth. Unreasoning terror was falling upon us. The darkness seemed electric, and we unconsciously kept straining our ears for footsteps and voices that never came. Whenever Abdul moved, Beatrice started nervously. Yet her eyes followed him with a certain trust and comfort. This was the first time she had spent a night in India away from the protection of

her husband. As for me, I was used to it, and inclined to be a bit practical and heartless. After the first gasp of fear, I forgot all about it, and let Beatrice manoeuvre me into the bed nearest the door and the window without protest.

At once the waves of sleep enclosed me like the waters of a warm sea. I was rudely drawn back to consciousness by a restless movement and a meek little honied voice saying:

"Marjorie, a tiger could easily get in here."

"Could he?" I answered sleepily. "He wouldn't bother. Think of all the nice little brown boys he could dine on before he got to us."

"But there are tigers in Bengal," she persisted.

"Well, never mind," I answered. "I'm right under the window. He'll surely eat me first."

"Abdul," she called. "Where are you?"

Abdul, it seems, was sleeping on the floor in the next room.

"I think you'd better sleep there," said the heartless little minx, pointing out a place where Abdul would lie right across the threshold outside.

Abdul sleepily complied.

"You want to make doubly sure," I remarked. "Now you are perfectly safe. If the tiger comes through the window he will eat me. If he comes through the door, he will eat Abdul. Now you have nothing more to worry about, and can go to sleep."

"Abdul," said she nervously, "don't you think you had better light the lamp again?"

Abdul lit the lamp.

"That," I suppose," said I, "is to show the tiger just where we are."

I must have fallen asleep then. For I came to again

out of a moment of peace and silence to find Beatrice audibly meditating on the probability that we would be carried off in our sleep to a harem. Indian harems, she said, do contain captured white women. This was too much!

"Yes, Beatrice," I sputtered sleepily. "There's only one form of destruction you are not likely to meet before morning. You can't be swallowed by a man-eating shark."

She was still rational enough to giggle at this. In the midst of the giggle I fell asleep and knew no more till a white streak of sunshine fell hot across my face and awoke me with a start. It was six o'clock in the morning. A boy was waiting outside with *chota hazri* for us. *Chota hazri* is morning tea, one of the most delightful institutions of India. It appears with toast, and sometimes with fruit, along with the first daylight, and is served by an officious boy at one's bedside. It saves one all the trouble of alarm clocks and other self-waking institutions, and makes of arising and dressing a social occasion.

But this, we discovered, was no ordinary *chota hazri*. Our kindly host thought he knew the tastes of American girls, and so with the tea appeared an enormous cake sugared and frosted and decorated with cherries, and all full of citron, nuts, and raisins. Nothing like that ever grew in the desert. It had come all the way from Calcutta in our honour.

"Shades of college proctors," said I, by way of announcing its advent to Beatrice. Never in my wildest academic dissipations in the way of midnight fudge and Welsh rabbit had I thought of eating a cake like that at six o'clock in the morning. But Beatrice and I were not going to miss any thrills which India might hold

for us, gastric or otherwise. Hopping over to a station on my red blanket, she helped me to balance the cake between us, and we fell to. Half way through we stopped in aching and satiated helplessness. I have often wondered what became of the other half of that concoction. Did some little mystic in the making consume it, I wonder, and turn his thoughts from the stars to the mysteries of a stomach ache?

The next morning we spent in wandering about among the buildings of the school. We walked down the road bordered with trees on which Tagore himself likes to pace back and forth and which is known as the Poet's Walk; we saw the stone slab which marks the favourite place of meditation of the Poet's father; we went through the simple dormitories where each boy owns a bed and a place for his books, and nothing more; we saw the out-of-door pavilion where the Poet likes to hold classes; and we called upon the Poet himself in the little building that forms his library. It was the only one of the bungalows which had anything of luxury about it. Here the piled-up dignity of books and pictures, with some busts and ornaments, and the spacious work-table, gave an impression of abundance and comfort in contrast with the austerity of everything else.

After lunch Lady Tagore, whom we had seen for only a moment the previous evening, came to call on us. "With rings on her fingers and bells on her toes," remarked Beatrice, and the quotation was far more literal in its application than it usually is. She was a lovely creature, and the asceticism that elsewhere prevailed had no part in her costume of crimson gauze, and the bracelets and hammered-gold chains that adorned her.

The Poet followed her, and we fell into an amusing chat in which she took small part, save to murmur

"Yes" and "No" with lovely, downcast eyes. Then we took our departure. I mean we began to take it—for the actual going proved to be a most leisurely matter. We had rashly volunteered our wish to ride once in an ox-cart. The ox-cart is the really characteristic native conveyance, and moves at the rate of a mile an hour and this under the stimulus of an Indian boy who encourages the oxen by tweaking their tails.

Fortunately our journey was only a mile long, though it took sixty minutes to make it. When we were safely on our own train, bound for other adventures and sacred spots, we blessed its beautiful swiftness and felt that even in India modern civilization has its compensations. And so we rode away, leaving behind us the sunshine and the little adobe shack that had been home to us for a day and a night, but carrying with us, to keep for ever, the memory of the Poet who had made us, for a little time, partakers in his peace.

CHAPTER XLI

UNDER THE BUDDHA TREE

FAR off the highways and tourist trails of India there is a sacred and sunny place to which for two thousand years the pilgrim feet of Asia have worn a path. For here the Lord Buddha beheld the way to peace. It was on the road to Buddha Gaya that Kim and his Lama were temporarily annexed by the vituperative old woman; and on that same path Kim fell in with his unknown father's regiment, and became, though unwillingly, for some time a Sahib and the son of a Sahib. And now, while those who travel by guide-books from hotel to hotel pass it by for the more obvious appeals of Benares, ever and again some white man mingles with the strange assembly of Oriental devotees that seek it out—a scholar, perhaps, a reader of strange books, or may be a dreaming theosophist.

Beatrice assured me that my visit to India would be worth no more than a ride around New York in a subway, unless I could stand under the tree where Buddha, the Holy One, received his enlightenment. After that, she thought, we might still walk in the ways of the gods till we came to the Ganges at Benares. As for the gods, I thought her own Italian saints were jollier folk, and vastly more intelligible. They didn't grow six arms and one or two superfluous heads like the Hindu gods of Benares, and they found time to play with dimpled little Christ-children instead of merely sitting on their feet like Buddha, and staring blankly into

Eternity. These reactions, Beatrice said, merely showed that I had not the soul of a Mystic.

So, for the time being, under her tutelage I became a pilgrim at strange shrines. Obediently I agreed to follow her on the way of the gods if she would then follow me among the passionate sensual loves and spacious ambitions of the great queen of the north who "Empress of all the Indies, with unlimited power, unlimited resources at her command, lay behind silken screens, in a marvellous tent of Kashmir shawls, held up by solid silver-gilt and set with precious stones."

"That, Beatrice," said I, "was really the life."

But Beatrice read me the story of that other queen, "Mayadevi, beautiful as the water-lily and pure in mind as the lotus. As queen of heaven she lived on earth, untainted by desire and immaculate. . . . At Lumbini there is a beautiful grove . . . where the trees were one mass of fragrant blossoms." There one day the queen left her golden palanquin to wander among the flowers, and there the Buddha was born, while "four pure angels of Brahma held out a golden net to receive the babe, who came forth from her side like the rising sun, bright and perfect."

So we matched queen against queen as we rode forth into the sunset on that jogging Indian train. There seemed to be no other white women on board—only dusky station-guards who looked in on us at every stop, and dark-faced, barefooted servants who thrust *cha* and bread spread with buffalo butter through our windows. Night swooped down upon us swiftly, annihilating all the outer landscape. The first-class compartment seemed suddenly small and intimate and strangely detached from all the world. We looked at each other half-blankly for a moment, realizing once more how

alone we were, like two souls journeying in a lighted balloon through black space.

Sleep in that dusty compartment did not look inviting, but we slept at last in utter weariness, fitfully, feverishly, startled continually by a gibberish of strange tongues without. Very early in the morning I awoke with my mouth and eyes full of fine dust. Outside there was a glare of golden sunshine on an empty golden land. Abdul appeared and indicated that we should soon be at Buddha Gaya, and for a time the toil of our pilgrimage was ended.

Under his efficient guidance we soon stopped at a little station set in the midst of a bright vacuum of sunlight, and were stowed in a trap, which, it seemed, would take us to a dak-bungalow. The dak-bungalow is a unique and blessed institution of the white man's India. It is an inn for travellers maintained by the British government at points where there is not enough traffic to support a hotel. Any one may claim its protection for twenty-four hours. If no one comes to supplant him, he may of course stay longer, but the newcomer always has the advantage, since it is assumed that in twenty-four hours one may, if necessary, learn enough about one's environment to find other shelter, and the whole point of the dak-bungalow is that it can be counted upon as an immediate asylum. The dak-bungalow may be anything from a tea-station, consisting of a roof supported by sticks, to a spacious and restful inn. The bungalow to which Abdul conducted us seemed to us that morning the very essence of hospitality. It stood in a rich shadow of palms beneath which some honest English grass had half succeeded in growing. Many things that we take for granted are not universal throughout the world, and a green lawn is one of them—it is almost en-

tirely an Occidental institution; so there was something lovely and homelike in that carpet of green beneath the palms. We drove up through flowering shrubs to a low bungalow half mantled in green and stepped out upon a screened veranda opening into two dim, cool rooms. Immediately a servant in white appeared, as if he had been expecting us, and another came pattering to our side with cold water and tea, and all the dust of the journey vanished in cleanliness and peace.

We were the only guests. It seemed like one of those hospitable old fables in which the knight in the enchanted woods comes to an empty house where all seems ready for his reception, though there is no host to greet him, and meals and baths and fresh clothing appear by magic served by unseen hands. So it was with us. A bath was forthwith ready, and then a four-course breakfast that seemed to our American tastes more like lunch than the first gastric venture of the day. We ate it leisurely, luxuriating in the beauty and the quietude without.

It was now about half past ten in the morning. Beyond the shadows of our retreat, the sun burned hotly, with a flash of white houses and a wide sweep of yellow land. In the green leaves close to the veranda there was a buzz and a movement, as of little living things. Sometimes a voice came to us, calling strange things in an alien tongue, and now and again there was a tinkle of bells and a patter of feet in the dust. But for the most part the scene was environed in silence. The opulence and mellowness of eternal summer lay upon the land. Nor was it the swooning languor of the tropics either; for the air was dry, and a breeze blew purely and freshly among the palms with a pattering sound.

For a time we simply luxuriated—in a peace more sensuous than Tagore's desert, more drowsing and comforting to the flesh, carrying with it more of slumber and dreams.

Then Beatrice aroused me.

"If we are to see the shrine of Buddha," she said, "we must go before the sun is too high, for Herbert scheduled us only a day in this lonely place, and we must leave at twelve o'clock to-night."

So, fortifying ourselves with more tea, we woke Abdul from a premature siesta and set forth in a conveyance which in India is called a *gharry*, a corruption, apparently, of the English word *carry*. Before us the highway lay wide, white, and dusty, patterned here and there with the sharp black shade of palms. And as we rattled forth upon it, I looked out with a sudden start as upon a dream at last come true. For there lay the real Orient before me, the Orient I had been seeking from Kobe to Calcutta and had never yet beheld in the flesh. For to me, as to most people, the word *Orient* had conjured up an image complex and a little vague yet full of quite definite details. And there it was before me—low white houses, and maidens bearing brazen water-bowls upon their heads; white pagodas beneath the palms, and a saint cross-legged in meditation; figures in draperies and turbans posing against an eternity of sunshine; and here and there the glitter of golden spires and the half-confessed presence of shrines and invisible priests. Everywhere I turned there was a new stage-set, and all the right characters were there, too, from a bad little boy, shrilly demolishing the reputation of an old woman, to a patriarchal dignitary in a beard as long as Abraham's and majesty to match. Then Beatrice cried:

"Marjorie, see him—the dear, darling, lovely, beautiful beast."

I turned to see a camel casually reaching for a meal in the top of a tree where the shoots grew tender and fresh. I could scarcely restrain Beatrice from jumping out forthwith and embracing the long legs of this old friend of her childhood. Buddha was for a time quite secondary to her rapturous contemplation of every new specimen of an animal which she averred was the kindest and the wisest in all the kingdom of beasts.

Meanwhile we had collected a retinue of beggars. An old man, leaning on a staff, held up our *gharry* and avowed that I was his grandfather and his grandmother—which was a polite way of indicating my responsibility for his support and nurture. It was a responsibility that I evaded, since a willingness to scatter cash brings the whole population of an Oriental town on one's heels forthwith and banishes peace for the duration of one's sojourn. Whereupon he told me that I was no better than I should be and my mother— Before he got to my grandmother, Abdul burst in from his swinging seat on the back of our *gharry* and told the old rascal the complete and unsavoury history of his own ancestors. The copious and brilliant volley of Oriental abuse which Abdul thenceforth scattered permitted us to go our way without obstruction, though not without drama and noise.

Soon we passed into the thick shade of trees in the midst of which rose a multitude of spires. In the centre there dawned on us the great central structure of Buddha's shrine, a kind of fantastic pyramid fashioned with a multitude of carvings, mounting far above the shade of the trees. It was gilded—though the gilt was fresh only in patches—with the offerings of the

pilgrims who come hither and give their quota of gold to be applied in fine gold leaf upon the stone. We entered by a path lined with shrubs and were promptly thronged by the beggars and lepers who sit there as pensioners upon the generosity of those who come to honour one who, like Christ himself, had never retained silver or gold to give away.

Abdul conducted us to the door of the shrine, somewhat disdainful the while. For he himself was an ex-Mohammedan, now turned Christian, though without any visible accession of Christian graces, and so this pursuit of the Buddha was to him doubly idolatrous. We kept passing pilgrims—and very different they were from the majority of those who come to great shrines. The interesting thing about them was that they seemed many of them of strange races and peoples whom one never sees in an Oriental metropolis—men from inland monasteries in China and centres of Buddhist lore set high among the mountains of Tibet. Among them was a fine old abbot in a yellow robe who might well have been Kim's own Lama. Few of them had Indian faces; the Mongolian almost entirely predominated. For Buddha was one of those prophets who are not without honour save in their own country, and the traces of his cleansing and pacific influence long since disappeared from his own land in favour of the popular faith which we were to see in all its splendour and pathos of devotion at Benares.

A priest came out and greeted us in a limited assortment of English words. He offered to escort us around the gardens. With him we went on a little stroll along the shaded path, stopping now and then to look in at some golden image of Buddha in a shrine. We paused under the tree which, he claimed, had descended in an

unbroken line from the Bodhi-tree, and he gave us two leaves of it to carry away. In halting English reinforced by Beatrice's brilliant and imaginative interpretation, he told us the story of the Buddha—how long ago the young Prince Siddhartha, blessed with all the gifts that God ever bestowed upon a youth (with beauty and virtue, with wealth and honour and the love of his people, with the most winsome of wives and a dear little baby son) could not be happy, because he saw that all the world was miserable, and that the life of man was one long losing fight with death, which might be held off awhile by the sacrifice of one's energies to the attainment of food and shelter, but which in the end must inexorably conquer; how, seeing this, "even as men desire to give happiness to their children, he desired to give peace to the world"; how he stole away by night—leaving all he loved behind him—to seek a spiritual medicine for the pain of the world.

Here Beatrice interposed with the story of the prince's visit to the room of his sleeping wife, that he might take one more glimpse of his best beloved. His baby son lay in the arms of his mother. And he longed to kiss the little one, but he lay so close to his mother's bosom that the prince could not touch him without awaking both. So he stood there gazing, as if he could never take his eyes away, till the thought of the love he was resigning brought tears to his eyes, and he hurried out and rode away swiftly under the stars, surrendering for ever the ties of human love, but not their memory.

The priest was a bit impatient of this sentimental interruption which Beatrice later substantiated by line and chapter in the gospel of Buddha. He went on to tell us, with controversial fervour, how Siddhartha sought enlightenment from Heaven at the gaudy shrines of the

gods—like those at Benares, for instance—and found that there was no answer to the riddle of life in sacrifices and ritual and graven images; how he sought peace in the life of the ascetic and found that to abuse the body makes one think the more of it and clouds the mind; and how at last he came to this tree and sat down to meditate on the trouble of the world. And here at last the answer came to him. He saw that all men are miserable and bring misery on each other, because they desire too much—because each is enclosed in the wall of his own sensations and wishes and cannot see beyond them to the good of the whole. To stop wanting anything in the world is the beginning of peace; and to lay aside all selfishness, all interest in one's self, and care only for others becomes in the end the culmination of joy. So the priest struggled to tell us, while Beatrice interpreted in swift and eager phrases.

We returned to the shrine, and, entering, signed the record of our pilgrimage in the presence of a great golden and painted image of the Buddha. We had to tell not merely our names but our "caste."

"Say *American*," said Beatrice, and she wrote it down with a flourish. Just where American stands in the pyramid of pride, learning, and pure breeding that constitutes the Hindu caste-system I do not know—very near the bottom, I fear.

When we had registered, a priest invited us to make a little contribution to the shrine. Though in general I dislike being held up by strange gods, in a world in which there are so many Christian uses for money, we both acceded gladly—Beatrice out of a somewhat exaggerated devotion which had been influenced by the theosophists and a reaction against Catholic priests, and I more soberly and with reservations. For I was glad to

do honour to the saint whose teachings I had found the source of much that is lovely and humane in the East, from Japan to Burma. That as a "philosopher" his claims upon the intellect of the West are somewhat exaggerated, I certainly believe. Whatever it may be to those who know its literature intimately, Buddhism, at least in so far as the Occidental may judge it, seems to me inferior in imagination, intelligence, and variety of achievement, as well as in basic social thinking, to the Christian tradition of Europe. Nor, purely in his human aspects, is its founder to be compared with the founder of Christianity. He remains a dim, though certainly a pure and lovely figure, without the sparkle, the humour, the vitality, and freshness of the remarkable personality of the Christian gospels. Yet the genuine beauty and sanity of Gautama's life, the nobility of Buddhist art, the humanity and wisdom of the Buddhist work of civilization in the East, and the fruits of its long and beneficent career in the personal refinement of life and manner in Buddhist countries like Japan and Burma—might well challenge the still provincial interests of our scholars.

This I tried to tell Beatrice, who said my enthusiasm was inadequate. The old priest, however, seemed to think it sufficient to deserve further hospitality, for, after glancing at our contribution, he beckoned to us to follow in his wake. We travelled down a shadowy path and through a door, and found ourselves in the courtyard of a great white monastery. A handsome fellow with flashing dark eyes appeared and conducted us into a little winding alley absolutely dark, where we soon stumbled against some steep stone steps. Dismay descended upon us. We squeezed each other's hands reassuringly, and the squeeze said:

"Where are we going?"

"Perhaps we are being kidnapped."

Abdul had been left outside. The dim passageway was very short, but it was long enough to let us reflect upon the foolishness of intrusting one's self to every handsome turban that beckons from a doorway. We climbed some dark, dusty stairs and emerged suddenly upon an open, canopied balcony. Before us all the courts of the monastery were spread out like a map, and monks in yellow turbans and yellow robes were picturesquely posing before various household tasks. Bowing and smiling, our guide led us before a personage with a shaven head and a light negligée garment, who sat before great books, turning the pages and half chanting to himself as he read. Before him there was a long silver pipe on a kind of stand level with his mouth, and, without touching it with his hands, he smoked serenely as he read. He paused, bowed slightly, and, glancing at us with faint curiosity, went on reading. Our guide produced a stool for us and a rug, and we sat down before the dignitary.

Beatrice's eyes telegraphed to me: "Why are we here?"

My lips formed a soundless answer: "A little lesson in mysticism."

Furtively we looked around. Below, a monk went on polishing a brass bowl. Somewhere some one was droning. Sheer bashfulness descended upon us. What were we to do, now that we had been received in such state?

The personage broke the silence by glancing up and articulating the word:

"Inglis?"

"American," we said.

The monk bowed and smiled intelligently as if to say that he knew Americans.

Conversation lagged. How could it be otherwise? When he spoke no English, and we spoke no—what did he speak, anyway? The monk was perfectly at ease. Genial and polished, he carried off all the social honours. He brought out a book to show us, scrawled over with strange characters and interlinear phrases here and there in English,—mostly references to Lord Buddha,—the work of some devotee struggling at once with the mysteries of faith and language. Everywhere there were hints of white men who had come and gone here, and had tried to learn a little; yet no one, not even the personage, seemed to know English.

The book helped for a moment, like a photograph-album at a country party. Then embarrassment descended on us again. Beatrice telegraphed:

“Can we go?”

I telegraphed: “How?”

The monk once more attempted to relieve the situation. He was evidently searching in his consciousness for another English word, which finally emerged: “Luns?”

He was inquiring whether we would have lunch. Our social panic reached its climax. If we didn't know what to do when we were merely sitting and enjoying a pleasant prospect, how should we get through a meal? Beatrice arose with decision, and smiling, with a little gracious sweep of her hand, indicated that we would go. The monk bowed, and without a word led us down through the dark passageway and out into the garden. Free!

And all the time they had merely mistaken us for inquiring theosophists. Late that afternoon, when, after

a siesta and a cold bath, we were enjoying afternoon tea on the veranda of the bungalow, we suddenly appreciated what had been expected of us. For a trap drove up, and a little white man emerged, followed by bundles and bundles wrapped in cloth. As the servant dropped them on the veranda, the cloth fell back, revealing books much like the interlinear tome we had looked at. The man was a tiny fellow—pale and all awry; one shoulder was higher than the other; his face was peculiarly pallid; his eyes were like round spots of blue porcelain; and his head was sparsely covered with straw-coloured hair. He returned for tea before we had quite finished, and at once fell into conversation with us. He spoke in correct and fluent English whose struggling *r*'s and literary idioms proclaimed that it was not his native tongue. Finally it developed that he was a Dutchman, and a theosophist, just returning from a long sojourn in a Himalayan monastery where he had been studying the sacred lore of Buddhism. He was coming to the monastery here, with letters of introduction. It was obviously the great event of his life. He hoped, yet scarcely dared to hope, that he would be kindly welcomed.

When we told him how we, two unheralded women without a spark of theosophical wisdom in our heads, had been received, his amazement flamed in a blush all over his pallid face. Eagerly he questioned us: what—what was it all like? Had we seen—naming some one apparently of importance. We were vague and ignorant. As we mentioned each little detail of the life we had witnessed, he seized upon it with an almost passionate understanding, which left it still dark to us. It was as if we were lightly describing some casual nobody met by the way, whom he knew to be veritably a god.

Even as we talked, night swooped down with a sudden

flame of scarlet in the sky, the stars blazed forth, and a cool wind came up and rattled among the palms. Dinner was announced, and we ate it with him. When the velvet night drew us out again to the veranda he poured forth a flood of confidence, like one who has had no audience for a long, long time. He told us about his search for truth, even in the white upper reaches of the Himalayas—about strange stories of gods who dwell among the snows, and old, old saints who have never died—how he himself had heard and witnessed a singing and shining that had no earthly source. He told, too, of a mysterious sense of communication with a kindred soul somewhere, some woman-soul which was vibrating in harmony with his, which he was destined to meet somewhere, and travel in companionship upon the sacred quest of truth—a high intention that was somehow mixed up with plans to lecture on theosophy in America and become rich and honoured as a sage among the generous and credulous folk of Southern California.

As he spoke there in the isolation of that bungalow, we three alone in the midst of an alien world charged with spiritual and ghostly influences through twenty centuries, Beatrice listened half hypnotized, her beautiful, pathetic eyes and fine face flaming and changing in wonder at this marvellous man. The presence there in the night of this lovely creature, so warm and responsive, loosened some pent-up passion that even saints and sages often bring back to civilization from long and lonely sojournings; and he poured forth some incoherent rapture to the effect that she was the mysterious woman-soul, the invisible companion hitherto of all his meditations. I rescued her sharply with reminders of prosaic matters of packing and baggage, and a train that left for Benares at twelve o'clock that night. Beatrice

recovered, and made her adieu with cool grace and aplomb. We saw no more of our theosophist.

But here a new situation faced us. Abdul had absconded. With dismay I remembered Beatrice's mischievous remark at dinner.

"I think," she had announced coyly, "that our Abdul has found a sweetheart here."

There had been, indeed, an air of vast importance and elation about Abdul, and that evening a blaze of Oriental adornments about his person had replaced the Western trappings he had acquired at Herbert's hands. We had thought little of it. But now as midnight and the Benares train approached, and there was no Abdul, the whole thing took on a different aspect. No deserted wife ever cursed the wiles of the other woman as did we while we sat helpless amid our baggage. We strained our ears against the darkness. We almost thought we heard the whistle of the incoming train somewhere in the black and far-off reaches of the night.

Just as we had decided that for us Benares must wait another day, Abdul turned up. There was about him an air of secret satisfaction—but he lied serenely. What, was memsahib worried? He had merely stepped out to get a clean white cloth in which to wrap some of memsahib's superfluous belongings. How could memsahib think that he, Abdul, could have any interest besides her? No, memsahib, he had been nowhere at all—only waiting for memsahib to stop talking to the Sahib and be ready to go to Benares—and a few minutes later found us efficiently deposited on the train and rattling through the night to new haunts of holiness.

CHAPTER XLII

THE LOTUS OF THE WORLD

WE crossed the Ganges early next morning and saw Benares,—the Holy City of the Hindus, the “Lotus of the World”—and the ghosts of its shimmering spires on the wide floods of the river, pearly white in the mists of dawn.

“A dirty hole,” remarked an Englishman as our train stopped. “More smells than odours of sanctity here, I should say, and more lepers than gods.”

He stepped into a *gharry* and rode disdainfully away. Our *gharry* followed his, down a wide, shaded avenue a little dusty, as was all India those days, and inhabited by a whole race of monkeys and some vociferous green parrots who screamed their good mornings to us and flew protesting into the sky. We stopped at a little hotel, a low white bungalow draped in a purple mass of bougainvillea that seemed like something transplanted from Mexico or Southern California.

The dirty city, with its piled up architecture of temple on temple and shrine on shrine, was thronged that day with moving masses of worshippers who had come—some of them from a long, long distance—to make themselves clean in the holy waters of the Ganges. All the life—the passionate, thronging, multi-coloured life of the city—centred in the river. And thither we turned, and there on its waters we spent the greater part of the day. We saw it first in the morning. We made our way to it through winding alleys and down endless steps lined

with fruit-stands which offered dirty sweetmeats for sale, and tissue paper nothings, and marigolds, the holy flower. Our way was crowded with the maimed, the sick, and the dying. For if one is sick, the holy water will perchance make one well; and if one must die, it is well to die here washed and shrived in the sacred waters that must bear one's worn-out body to rest in the sea. And for the maimed there is at least the consolation of pity from those whom religion makes merciful. Here and there sat a wild-eyed fakir, a living skeleton marked with ash. Here and there a Brahmin wearing the white cord of the twice-born moved through the throng, holding out a hand to clear a space before him lest he should be contaminated by some mortal made of baser clay. Everywhere there were the blind, the halt, and the lepers—above all, the lepers. Through it all the sacred cows wandered serenely, those ubiquitous and privileged members of every Indian throng.

"Won't it seem strange," remarked Beatrice, "not to see a cow wandering down Fifth Avenue?"

But all was glorified by the shimmer of white sunshine, the gleam of marigolds, the circus-like gaiety, and the wail of wild music afar off.

So we descended the steps to the river and pushed out into the water on a raft. Then the landscape blazed! Before us rose the enormous piles of the temples, temple on temple, palace on palace, rampart on rampart—the architectural accumulation of hundreds and hundreds of years, blazing and twinkling and shining. From among them descended steps to the water, wide steps and narrow steps, with balconies and pavilions interposed; and all these were thronged with vast crowds gay as a rainbow, from the distance coloured like the blaze of a sunset. For all the wealth and the glory, the hid-

den colour and light of India, had come forth to walk side by side with the naked fakir and leprous pilgrim down into the cleansing flood. The river was full of heads; yet still the throngs poured in. Every one wore his gayest dress—and there is no brilliance of colour in all the world like that of India in full regalia. Purple and orange, cerise and crimson, green and turquoise blue, the pilgrim crowds bloomed in the landscape. Gorgeous ladies laid aside chiffon draperies of parrot green and mauve and scarlet, and stepped down in their silken chemises. Special pavilions for rajahs and rich Brahmins poured forth the beauty and glory of all queenliness and wealth. Yet the poorest stepped in with as proud a sense of proprietorship, and the little children rode the bright waters safe in the arms of their parents. One old, old man was bathing a naked baby who kicked the sacred waters riotously with his fat little feet and sucked in the trickles of water that travelled down over his nose from his wet curls. Everywhere, too, the brass was sparkling, for each pilgrim carried a bowl in which to bear away the holy water, polished to catch the sunlight. Each bowl blazed in the landscape in a little point of flame.

But there were greater and brighter flames too—red fires tended by naked men—and the smell of burning human flesh came to us on the breeze. We drew up to one of these fires. It was a funeral pyre. The bodies of the dead, draped and fastened to biers, sometimes tied with garlands of flowers, lay all about, awaiting their place in the flames. Meanwhile the men tended the fires, turning over the bodies till they blazed more brightly and with a sharper odour. Others were dredging the river, for, when the ashes of the dead are thrown

into the water, coins and jewelry are sometimes among them, and it is profitable to search out and find these spoils of death. One man boarded our raft with the plunder he had collected, a pile of odd bits of silver, with cinders still clinging to it. He had been lucky, he said; for only yesterday the beloved bride of a rich man had been burned there, and all her body was hung with silver. When he learned this, he kept it a secret from the others, and robbed the ashes before any one else knew. So saying, he hopped over into his own boat and went gloating away over the spoils of that dead love.

It was all a strange and gorgeous sight—yet very, very sad. I looked back on those thousands and thousands of men. What long journeys they had come to wash away their sins! How all their money and strength and the hopes of their lives centred in that morning bath in the sunshine and that brazen bowl full of bright water; and this passion of religious faith, this haunting and driving sense of uncleanness in the sight of invisible judging eyes which men have felt in all ages and climes, seemed pathetic to me, and full of mystery. Then I looked out on the broad, cool floods of the river. How many ashes of men had mingled with its purity! How many dead had gone down to the sea in its arms! How heavy it was with the sins and the sorrows of men who had striven to wash their very souls in its depths! It looked so broad and clean and strong—clean with the cleanness of the snowy heights where its myriad streams were born. So strange a river it seemed—born on the mountain tops, going so long and so majestic a journey to the sea, fertilizing the fields of the land on its progress, nourishing its people in life, and receiving into itself their sufferings and their sins, and taking them at

last out of the dust and flame of life into its own everlasting coolness and peace. What river in all the world can touch it in majesty—this holy mother Ganges?

I saw it again in the twilight. A rosy moon hung over the empty sands to the east, flushing the pearly smoke that veiled the river. To the west, silhouetted against the last gleam of daylight, rose the temples, pile on pile, blooming now with a thousand lights. On all the steps were little bowls of oil, each with a floating wick; and robed figures moved among them, ghostly silhouettes among unstable stars. Above there were glowing windows, and here and there a veiled woman looking forth. In one place lanterns were hung from tall, bending poles that were like a garden of nodding blossoms. And everywhere there flamed the unwearied fires of the dead.

As we moved down the water through all this ghostly brightness, Beatrice asked: "Which is better, do you think—to be buried in a grassy place beneath a tree, or to be burned and go up in smoke among the stars?"

And as I did not answer, she continued after a pause, "If one is buried in a grave, one may come up into the sunlight as a violet, year after year, but if one is burned, one is but a brief light, and is then for ever gone. I think I will be buried beneath the grass and become a violet."

As the darkness grew deeper, all the waters were lighted with moving stars, as men set forth on them bowls of burning oil that tossed for a moment like little boats and then went out in darkness. The shore was full of figures who sat with brazen bowls wherein now and then leaped the reflection of a flame. Sometimes there was the splash of a solitary bather. Then there rose on the air a wailing strangely pitched, unearthly, speaking

out of the heart of the sombre night; and we saw holy men in the distance silhouetted around little fires, singing.

And so we floated on, into a world of dreams and of terror that wore a face of beauty, beneath the dome of the night. And the strangeness and the splendour of it was with us even next morning when we turned our faces out into the prosaic dust of the day, bound for other cities and adventures more homely and more human.

CHAPTER XLIII

MEMORIALS OF OLD BLOODSHED

"LOOK at him!" said Beatrice. "He looks like an Irish politician."

He was a very wise-looking monkey, sitting in a tree over our heads and industriously engaged in shaking the dust of Benares down upon us, apparently in honour of our departure. A host of his brethren came chattering forth and escorted us some distance on our way; and the last we saw of the city of the gods was this company of unregenerate little creatures, with their cynical, age-old faces and their pathetic parodies of human ways.

So Beatrice and I rode forth and forgot for a time the gods. We had struck a new trail, the trail of the white man in India, too often a tragic and blood-stained way; and on that we were to travel till we came into the palatial cities of the north.

But first we turned aside to make one last obeisance to Oriental divinity at Sarnath. Sarnath is the older site of Benares, where Buddha taught after he had received enlightenment at Buddha Gaya. It is now full of the great ruins of what was once one of the most spacious and cultivated monasteries of the East. All round, the empty land lies golden in the amber light of the day; and within its ruined walls there lingers something a little foreign to the spirit of India—some memory of those Greek artists who seemed to have followed in the wake of Alexander the Great long ago, and found in the pure and simple spirit of Buddhism something

congenial with their own tradition. It was strange to wander here, to mark out the almost obliterated boundaries of the monastery, stumbling now over a bit of lotus in stone, incomparably delicate, now over a column, now over a wall whence some graven story had been broken away. We wandered about the monks who had lived here long ago, about the dead hands whose patience had carved so delicately, interpreting in Greek beauty the story of Buddha. Whence came it, this Greek loveliness? Was it the memory of the Parthenon, persisting here centuries after the original stood ruined among the wrecks of Greece? Centuries after the ruffians who came with Alexander were safely consigned to dust?

The central monument, a vast conical tower, rose straight into the blue sky, carved with great lotuses. The flower seemed to blossom in the stone in all its living grace, lovingly interpreted as one might catch and interpret the gestures of a beautiful woman, in endless poses and attitudes of beauty.

We entered the museum and wandered for a while among Buddhas standing and sitting. Stiff and archaic in body, they were beautiful in countenance, like ones who had "attained to look on the beginning of peace." Then we passed on, carrying with us like a benediction on our new adventures the memory of a Buddha with a calm Greek face.

Plunging for some hours through dust and light, we came to Allahabad, a flat and dingy city. Somewhere I read a poem about a boy who used to dream romantically of being a "prince in Allahabad." The poet must have picked out this site for a palace strictly on the sound of the name, for it has nothing to contribute to royal splendour now except dust and poverty. But here again

we found the hand of the white man not in such ghostly memories of grace as people Sarnath but in a homely bit of Nebraska flourishing in a great pomp of waving grain and all the efficiency of fertilizers and silos!

For a missionary with a wife who is a niece of Buffalo Bill had settled here, and had wisely decided that what ailed India was that it didn't know how it ought to be farmed. They had taken possession of a stretch of semi-desert country, and by treating it as one might treat the soil of Nebraska, had produced for the edification of the whole province a first-class imitation of a great Western farm. Fresh and homelike they seemed to us, those bright harvest fields, and the sleek, handsome stock contentedly basking in the shadow of a model barn. I had not realized till then how unnecessary starvation was in India, nor how unnatural were those wastes of sun-baked, unblossoming earth.

The farm included a leper mission. Here, too, the healthy and efficient love of the good brown earth which these Westerners had brought had exerted a medicinal influence. The station had been started long ago by a Christian girl who found herself a leper, and had rescued herself at last from the despair of her living death by making more happy the lot of others like herself. The missionary had then added his gospel of the soil to her gospel of self-forgetting. The lepers were housed in cottages beneath the shade of trees, and given all the responsibility of individual householders. Before each cottage was a little garden where those who still had the use of their limbs might work. I saw one man digging with a trowel tied to a stump of a hand that was almost eaten away. He stopped and chatted with us quite cheerfully. An old woman, obviously in pain, twisted and knotted with disease, had nevertheless hobbled



Courtesy Foreign Missions Library, 156 Fifth Ave., N. Y.

Fresh and home-like they seemed to us, those bright
harvest fields



Courtesy Foreign Missions Library, 156 Fifth Ave., N. Y.

This agricultural efficiency was to us the most interesting thing
about Allahabad



The Palace of the Peacock Throne at Delhi

out to a station under a tree where she could criticize the agricultural efforts of her neighbours. The leper colony was clean and fresh and full of green growing things, and everywhere there was a stir of enterprise. And when the missionary noticed a cloud of flies, he demonstrated the value of science in charity by remarking to his Indian attendant:

"Too many flies here. Find their breeding-place and remove it."

This agricultural efficiency was to us by far the most interesting thing about Allahabad, but we showed our appreciation of its site by standing where the Jumna and the Ganges join, a holy union of two storied and sacred rivers. The waters were full of the bodies of those who had died of influenza, and had been flung in unburned and uncleansed, because during those terrible days there were no facilities in India for handling the great influx of the dead. As they floated down with faces upturned to the staring sky, there was a splash, a darting of some hidden life, and a ripple that told that another piece of mortal clay had gone to its last resting place in the stomach of a crocodile. And the little white children liked to scamper down to stand on the red bridge and watch this ghastly drama! As each body disappeared, they would cry: "Hi, there goes another one." Their sympathy was wholly with the crocodiles.

Leaving Allahabad at noon, we paused for two hours toward sunset in Cawnpore, a beautiful little city full of British bungalows and British lawns and the most bloody memories of British history in India. For here in the rebellion of 1857 a band of two hundred English soldiers defended a great company of English women and children against an attacking force of three thousand rebel sepoys, well trained, well armed, and well

provisioned. Through the quiet English lawns that now cover that scene of old torture we traced the story—the mounting total of the dead day by day; the well in which the bodies of these cut down were thrown; the spot on the river-bank where the rest embarked under safe-conduct of the enemy, only to be attacked and to perish amid the flames of their own boats in mid-water; the house in which a remnant of one hundred and twenty-five whom the enemy chose to keep alive for a time were lodged to die of slow disease; and the spot where those who survived even this last trial were finally taken out and shot. It was all so quiet now—those old scars of shot covered with healing grass and fresh verdure, and caressed by the light and quiet shadows of the late afternoon; and around the altar of the memorial church, built in honour of those sufferers, the winged angels, with glowing halos and shining faces, kept guard in the incensed dusk of evening over the names and tablets of the unforgotten dead.

One more dash through the dark, and we emerged in a wider land of vast spaces and an infinite glory of light. This was the Mohammedan country, peopled with the memories of fierce kings and conquests, and palaces still fresh with their splendour. In the midst of the bright emptiness sits Lucknow, a queen of cities. She is only an imitation of a queen, perhaps, for all her jewels are paste, and the real sovereignty of this land lies beyond in Delhi and Agra; but she bears herself with majesty none the less.

Everything in Lucknow was on a grand scale—endless avenues, parks that seemed wide as prairies, buildings whose roofs alone could span the average Oriental town, and, shining in white grandeur of mosque and minaret, the great procession of the tombs of the kings

of Oudh. We revelled in the bigness and the cleanliness, so different from the ill-smelling clutter of many an Eastern city.

We soon came to a venerable place, like some forgotten corner of an English estate. The grass was still green, though elsewhere the world was dust; and there were depths of coolness and shade between the trees, and the ruins of walls and forts and towers, half overgrown with moss and the purple light of bougainvillea. Greybeard English soldiers in khaki and helmets tottered to and fro among the shadows of these ruins. Over it all there was the peace, the dignity of old age.

This was the Residency. Like Cawnpore it was the scene of one of the most terrible dramatic episodes in the rebellion of 1857, when the native troops of the British in this northern country turned against their masters and used upon them the training and the supplies they had received at their hands. It had been something of a British manor once, well walled and fortified. Here the English governor of the land had dwelt, after the Kingdom of Oudh, of which Lucknow was the capital, had been transferred from the rule of its own degenerate kings to that of the British. Here the women and children had been gathered and, under the defence of a handful of Englishmen, had withstood attack from the first of July till the twenty-fifth of September. Again and again the hordes of the enemy fell back.

Flying and foiled at the last by the handful they could
not subdue,

And ever upon the topmost roof the banner of England
blew.

The topmost roof still carries the banner of England
over which Tennyson exulted; but this building is ruined

now, a clinging place for vines and flowers, and a nest for a hundred birds.

Soberly we wandered in the quiet shadows, retracing the steps of those bloody days. The greybeard soldiers came out and talked to us, for they were veterans of the famous fight, ready to guide us like ghosts among the memorials of forgotten bloodshed. We saw the cellar where the women and children huddled day after day while the world shook with gunfire above them, and news of the dead and the dying was all that punctuated the dreary hours. And we saw the corner where Jessie had heard the sound of bagpipes in her dreams—bagpipes that were later to come to the rescue when Havelock and his Highlanders, riding on camels, past mosque and palace whose resistance melted like snow before them, came into Lucknow on that September day. We saw, too, the grave of Sir Henry Lawrence, who was killed in the defence of his people, with its brief and noble epitaph that he himself devised :

Here lies Henry Lawrence, who tried to do his duty.

Afterward we went out to the edge of the city, through infinite spaces of lawn and avenue, and followed the famous march of Havelock, past plaster mosques embroidered in flourishes of bright blue paint, and yellow palaces now crumbling into dust.

We stopped, too, among the palaces where the seven hundred and more wives of the kings of Oudh had lived. They were not real palaces, for the kings of Oudh were but tributary monarchs and their taste in building was decidedly cheap. So these were just low structures around a central square. It was interesting to meditate on the lot of a wife who was one in seven hundred.

Beatrice and I did mental arithmetic on the subject till our heads spun round. If every wife could see her husband one day in turn, she would see him once in every two years. We speculated on an array of seven hundred spring bonnets, and the complications of seven hundred families of children, and seven hundred curtain-lectures, and seven hundred wives going through the pockets of one husband. Forgiving one's brother seventy times seven seemed an easy matter compared with multiplying domestic difficulties by seven hundred. Afterward, however, when we saw the picture of the last king of Oudh, we were rather inclined to congratulate the ladies on being seven hundred. There is safety in numbers, and every one of them must have rejoiced that she did not have to endure him all alone. One seven hundredth of such a creature seemed all that any mortal wife could stand.

The study of the portrait of this outrageous king was the climax of our visit to the tombs of his ancestors in the Mohammedan portion of the city. It was a strange world, that place of tombs—vast, blatant, unsubstantial. One after another they rose, those mighty domes and minarets blazing white against the blazing blue, with wildernesses of scalloped arch, and waters that caught and doubled every curve and flash of whiteness. They were all of painted plaster, decorated in outrageous whorls of black and blue paint, and filled with chandeliers and bangles and vases of cheapest coloured glass. It was a kind of paste splendour, yet lacking not in grandeur of conception. For they were but imitation kings, those kings of Oudh, and well deserved to sleep in imitation splendour.

Beneath one domed roof we found a collection of their portraits, and a strange study in degeneracy it was. It

was rather like a line of portraits in a modern plutocratic family, for kings in the old days corresponded very nearly to capitalists in ours. The first was a rather fine old fellow, a Persian adventurer who had carved out a kingdom for himself, and looked well fitted for the task. He had a hooked nose and fierce eyes that glared beneath a jewelled turban, and the limbs beneath his silken robes were those of a man who knew hard riding and rough days. A dauntless old man, proud and able, and bigoted no doubt, yet instinct with life, all tension, will, and power, just the kind that wrests kingdoms and fortunes from the world for a degenerate line of sons to waste. His first three successors were not so bad. Perhaps they could not win a kingdom, but they looked like men who could hold one. They had something of the stamp of his energy, and a Moorish and Saracenic pride of royalty; men who could wear a crown and wield a sword with equal dignity.

Then the degeneracy began. Fat began to take the place of muscle, and a softness of mouth and chin and a languor of eye replaced the tenseness of face and fierceness of glance. They were galvanized into a kind of passive kingliness when the British government invested them with golden crowns and ermine, only to be succeeded by a worse degeneracy. The face of the last king, the husband of the seven hundred, was curtained for very shame. We persuaded our guide to draw it aside. The thing that was revealed, though masculine, was really the face and form of a courtesan, fat and white. The plump, bejewelled hands, small and soft as a woman's, pointed to a slit in his vest which he had had cut to show the whiteness of his skin, and above it his fat, smooth face, with its curving red lips, smirked with feeble vanity.

My last glimpse of Lucknow was at evening time from the iron bridge. The queenly city lay beneath the sunset, every mosque and minaret silhouetted grey against the light, like shadow against flame. Tomb and mosque and minaret, they seemed to hang and hover in the heavens without body or earthly foundation—mosque upon mosque and minaret upon minaret; and the waters that reflected them made of them only fairy pictures among the clouds. Quivering over the city hung the evening smoke of India, and the dull red fires of cow-dung shone forth, and the crows flew cawing into the night. So we returned home, but I was startled by a strange ghost, a monkey perched in a tree above me, eyeing me solemnly in the dusk, like a little old man.

CHAPTER XLIV

THE LAND OF THE GREAT MOGUL

THE jewels were no longer paste and the world grew even wider. We had come into Delhi, the real city of kings, where palace has grown on palace, through centuries of Indian history. The clutter, the small scale and ephemeral character of tropical royalty, had wholly vanished. This was a vast land, full of vast spaces, once ruled by able kings from the hills who built forts like mountains, and palaces beneath the marble arches of which even an emperor would feel himself but a little thing.

They stretch for miles on the plains, ruins where kingdom has succeeded kingdom, and palace has followed palace, and temple has been built on temple in response to conquering hordes from the north. Some of them are old and ruined; only the gipsies inhabit them now, and the green parrot screams from the broken towers; but some of them are still fresh, as if their splendour was a thing of yesterday, and the clink of some queenly anklet might still sound across the marble floors.

Our guide to all these splendours should no doubt have been some lovely ghost. But luck sent us instead a cheerful individual from Missouri—of whom more anon. We did not meet him till afternoon.

The morning we spent in the courts of the great mosque of Shahjahan. It is built solidly, like a fort, of red sandstone inlaid with black and white marble. For

an hour we wandered among its solemn white corridors and domes, and then among the upper galleries where the queenly ladies used to sit behind curtains that protected them from the gaze of men. Did they flirt a little, I wonder? Did ever a smile never shine through the enveloping folds? Were there no fluttering hearts among the veils, no ripple of soft silks which told some lover below of her who worshipped there in concealment, no clink of ornaments that spoke a language all their own? Were the thoughts of men below always on holy matters? Or did they, on their ascent to heaven, stop sometimes at the galleries above, behind which there was perfume, and the casual music of bracelets, and a mystery of breathing life?

We climbed one of the minarets and saw the city spread out before us. Our guide filled his arms with the frightened doves who had got caught in the towers, and set them free from the top of the minarets. He was a tall turbaned priest who looked as if he should have been on a Sunday-school card. After extracting money from us for prayers and finding us profitable, he returned with four other big, handsome rascals who stood in a row before us, looking for all the world like a committee of the sons of Jacob, and said that they too would pray for us—for a consideration.

By this time we had grown wary. Then one of them bethought himself of other temple wares. He led us to a little shrine where another handsome rascal produced a copy of the Koran written, so he averred, by the sacred hand of Mohammed himself, together with Mohammed's shoes preserved in jasmine flowers, and a stiff red bristle which, he said, once grew in Mohammed's beard. This, avowed the priest, kow-towing to it reverently, was "beautiful." He asked us to pay two rupees for the

vision of such beauty. We shouldn't have another such chance, he said, this side of Mecca.

When we returned to the hotel, the hostess, to whose special ministrations Herbert had consigned us, bustled out and, with an air of romantic importance, said that a gentleman wished to meet us. He was an American from Missouri, and wondered whether we would let him take us out that afternoon in his automobile to see the palaces. Beatrice and I briefly deliberated and said we would meet him.

A few minutes later a tall slim youth, with an easy, springy figure, came in and, with a few preliminaries, asked, in a middle western voice and accent: "Would you really like Jimmy to take you rubbernecking this afternoon?"

"Jimmy," it seems, was his large automobile, somewhat the worse for wear and still carrying a miscellaneous collection of the dust of India. He and Jimmy had just come in, he explained, intending to stop for lunch and go on. He was on his way to Lahore to sell sewing machines. But, discovering our names on the register, he had gone to the hostess and asked whether we were sufficiently young, pretty, and good-natured to stay over for, and then had changed his plans and decided to show us palaces—all in the course of an hour before the lunch which he now proposed to eat with us. All this he told us simply and easily, without the slightest trace of impudence, with even some of that shyness that an American of this sort so often hides beneath his self-possession.

There was a flash of telegraphic intuition between Beatrice and me, and then with that pretty assumption of all the prerogatives of *Mrs.* which, though younger



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We climbed one of the minarets and saw the city spread out before us like a map



Street scene in Delhi

than I, she always liked to flourish over me on such occasions, she graciously accepted his arrangement.

During lunch our Yankee asked suddenly: "Do you really care about these old guys?"

"You mean those Mohammedan emperors?" asked Beatrice. "They make the poor little kings of Europe look quite like the proletariat, don't they?"

He looked a bit dazed by this statement, and answered almost bashfully: "Oh, I really don't know anything about the old boys—but these are *some* palaces, believe me—just like I read about in *The Arabian Nights* when I was a kid. But the other fellows always guy me for caring about this sort of thing in India. You know, really, I stop to look at a palace every time I get a chance," he ended naively, as if he were half ashamed of the weakness.

Then settling down to a lesson in history, he asked: "Tell me, did the fellow who built the palaces here build those at Agra?—I have just come from there. Gee, they have some beauties there, and the Taj Mahal—like a white lily in stone!"

"The man who built the Taj Mahal also built all the palaces here," said Beatrice. "But some of the palaces of Agra were the work of his grandfather, Akbar."

"And what," asked our Yankee, "is the difference between Akbar and Shahjahan?"

Beatrice explained that famous line of emperors, beginning with Tamerlane whose name was a fable in Europe, and the symbol even to the English Marlowe of all-conquering pride. She told how Akbar had built up one of the greatest of Asian empires, and had united under his rule more of India than had been united till Great Britain took the country over from his descendants;

how he had been succeeded by Jahanjir, who was remarkable mainly because he was the husband of Nur-mahal, whom he had loved in his youth and had won when she was a widow of forty, though for at least twenty years after she still bore the reputation of matchless beauty unequalled among the young maidens; and how Shahjahan had followed and had built up and had consolidated the great empire which he had inherited.

"To the courts of Akbar," added Beatrice, "flocked even great European scholars and artists, and were welcomed for their learning and their genius."

"Let's see now," said our Yankee, briefly recapitulating: "Akbar was grandpa—and he staked out the claim and was a bit of a high-brow, by the way; then there was Nurmahal, who was forty years old and a peach; and then Shahjahan—that's all right. And now just let's dangle along and see the little cottages the old boys used to inhabit around here."

Forthwith we set out. The world was all before us in the shape of wide yellow country where on all sides great domes and minarets and broken walls rose in clusters for miles and miles; and here and there a camel-caravan passed by and eyed us with vague wonder.

"I'm going to ask the next camel-driver I see to let me have a ride," said Beatrice rashly. A few minutes later another camel hove in sight. The Man from Missouri stopped his car in a businesslike way, flourished a rupee before the camel-driver, and the great beast promptly plumped down beside the car, looking at Beatrice with bland, inquiring eyes. Beatrice gasped. The Man from Missouri said simply: "You said you were going to ride the next camel. Here he is."

Beatrice climbed on his back at once and disappeared into the sky.

"Will you ride, too?" asked the Man from Missouri, and forthwith another beast prostrated himself.

Fearfully I clambered upon that odd, warm, misshapen lump of meek animal flesh, trying to find a comfortable bump to hang on to, and feeling positively bashful on such close acquaintance with a creature hitherto known to me only in circuses. Suddenly he began to rise, and I clung to him in terror—as I went up, up, up into the heavens, and the Yankee and the automobile below sank down into far-off diminutive proportions. I never in my life imagined that a beast could be so tall. I sat far above the shrubby trees by the wayside, on the level with domes and minarets. Then he began to move! It was like riding on a house that was falling to pieces beneath one. Every time he took a step, his whole anatomy seemed to cave in, and I fell from one loose, dangerous hollow to another on his unstable back. There was not the cushiony firmness of a horse's back at all—just an irregular mass of bones, loosely put together. The ship of the desert—I should say so! A shipwreck! And all the time, there was Beatrice blithely riding away into the blue sky like one to the manner born, talking a strange petting language to the outrageous brute.

Then the dusty earth seemed to shake beneath me, and another camel came loping past, bearing, it seemed, a complete tent on its back. As it came opposite me, a pair of wondering dark feminine eyes looked forth out of crimson shawls into mine, but the beast went on.

"Ships that pass in the night," I reflected, "have nothing on the camel-backs that pass in the sky."

"Are you tired?" shouted the Yankee from below after

two centuries had passed, and I was still proceeding into bright space.

"Oh, I don't know," I called down nonchalantly, determined not to confess. "I suppose I might as well get down."

Crash went my ship into the desert—he was merely kneeling. And there was I only a few feet above the ground, clinging to his hot, shaggy side as if I really loved him. I slid off, feeling myself barely safe from an uncanny death, but with an outward appearance of having ridden camels all my life, which I was modelling strictly on the experienced behaviour of Beatrice. But, oh, the blessed charm of that automobile, so near the safe earth, so wide and well-cushioned!

Passing many a cluster of ruins and many beautiful dome and minaret and carved gateway, we came at last to a great sand-stone gate guarded by two monster elephants in stone. This led through great walls to the palaces of Shahjahan, which still stand in something of their original glory. Dainty creations they were, built for the delight of ladies—for such a lady as the sweet girl whom he loved with a love amazing in the annals of Oriental monarchs, and whose name he for ever enshrined in the white delicacy of the Taj at Agra, loveliest of all the monuments ever built to a beloved woman.

There were marble pavilions the columns of which seemed to grow out of lotus blossoms, inlaid with carnelian and bloodstone and agate, every inch of the wall delicately jewelled as a lady's bracelet. They opened on gardens which are now dry and dusty but which were once sweet with roses. There fountains had once flashed in marble basins inlaid with silver and filled at night with coloured lights over which the waters played like living and leaping jewels. In such a rose-garden,

no doubt, Nurmahal had met her lover at last, and had united the late brilliance of her wonderful life with that of the weak man whose only strength was that he loved her.

In the more intimate apartments there were rose-water fountains in which the ladies long ago had bathed. These palaces all looked out on the river, whence in the afternoon the breeze blew cool and fresh. It was the quintessence of delicate luxury. I had been in many Oriental palaces, and this was the first in which a wholesome, active, and dainty lady of to-day might feel happily at home. For the luxury was founded on the love of simple and natural things, the breeze that blew over the waters, the sight of the wide-spreading plains, the perfume and freshness of roses, the splash and coolness and cleanliness of running water.

As we wandered there, the sunlight lay in long streaks among the marble columns, like the sunlight of afternoon among the trees of the forest, and warmed the marble into gold. And among those long shadows in the cool of the afternoon we tried to call into life the scenes of old times—to set the roses to blooming, and the water to splashing over the silver and the coloured lights, to fill the empty halls with the moving silks of women, the clink of silver anklets and golden chains, the shine of jewels in plaited hair. How sweet the evening breeze across the waters, how pleasant the long shadows among the roses, how the whole palace would wake to gaiety after the midday rest! For the great unscrupulous statesman who had built these palaces was once a lover, too.

Then we turned away to look at the relics of that old life which the British had collected in the museum. There were jewels and old silks and swords too heavy

for a modern hand to wield. There were pictures of these Mohammedan emperors—a dark-eyed, white-skinned, stately tribe. Then suddenly, in the midst of it all, I came across a soldier's khaki jacket and spy-glass—strange and humble relic of to-day in the midst of old-time splendour. It was symbolic. This was that before which the proud empire had crumbled and brought all its jewels into the dust—the gallantry of some stray son of England lost in the wilderness, straight-hitting, hard-riding, without kingliness or wealth, conquering only because he must carry on or die.

But as we left the building, we came across another trace of English conquest, and one that was not wholly lovely. For a regiment of British Tommies now encamps within the royal walls. And as we passed their quarters, we looked into a poor little sitting-room where two Eurasian women, half Indian, half English, dressed in English muslin and high-heeled English shoes, sat sewing and gossiping. And looking back at the palaces so lovely still in conquest and desertion, and then at that poor cheap little imitation of English homes, those dusky copies of English wives, inheriting the place of the empresses, Beatrice shivered and murmured:

“Now these be thy queens, O Delhi!”

The Man from Missouri was silent. His slangy comment had long since sunk in speechlessness. But as we sped away, the weight of that old glory seemed to fall away from us, and the chatter began. We felt more at home with each other when we came to some ruined walls half overgrown with grass. We chased each other down a dusty corridor within a great wall, and lost ourselves in the darkness of half a dozen man-made caves and dungeons, and disturbed gipsies and parrots and bats. When we saw in the distance a slender shaft of

sandstone rising straight into the sunset, we turned our automobile toward it. We did not realize that it was the Kutab Minar, one of the great towers of the world.

As we drew near, it seemed a vast thing, shooting up to touch the very clouds and carved with strange figures and records of old history. Not knowing its fame and dignity, we took possession of it with the naïveté with which the old English traders took possession of the great kingdoms of India, and started to climb. It was deserted and dusty within, and outside the landscape was darkening. But we went up and up, issuing now and then on little curved balconies and delighted to see the world receding beneath us, and even domes and palaces falling away in diminishing perspective, while the air so high above the earth grew ever cooler and fresher, and the casual sounds of the land were lost in silence. At last Beatrice stopped breathless on a balcony and said she would go no further. But I thought I could not rest till I reached the very top. The Yankee hesitated a minute, and then came on with me. The walls were now narrowing around us, and we were coming out into the spire in which the shaft ended.

Suddenly we issued into a shimmer of green and sapphire moonlight, for the twilight had deepened suddenly, and the crescent moon flamed on the forehead of the night, and the great stars seemed to look with wondering faces upon these two intruders into the sky. On that height it was very still, and the winds of evening blew freshly, with a faint, melancholy sound.

"Makes you want a sweetheart," said the Man from Missouri, bashfully.

"Yes," I answered, my own thoughts a thousand miles away.

Slowly the sky around us deepened into depths and

depths of shimmering shadow, and far below, the lights twinkled forth in chains and clusters that marked roads and villages like jewels upon the breast of the world. All India seemed to lie before me. I thought of all the trails that I might still follow among its wonders—among the unseen and unscaled Himalayas, among the jungles that lay far to the South. And of all but one remained to me, the one that led around the white feet of the Taj Mahal—and back to Japan and the shadow of Fujiyama.

And there alone in the sky among the stars of India, all that I had seen seemed but a little thing; for this is always the lot of the wanderer, that the true tale of his journeyings is not the tale of the things he sees, but the story of the greater things he passes by.

CHAPTER XLV

OLD LOVE AND MODERN COMEDY

THIS is a lesson in the way the Englishman rules India. Hitherto Beatrice and I had regarded the British government as largely irrelevant so far as we were concerned. The old Moguls we liked because they had been very grand and were now safely dead, but the Englishmen, as rulers, had no romance to recommend them. They did, we discovered, have a sense of humour.

The discovery was in this wise. One morning Beatrice and I were enjoying the calm domestic hour between *chota hazri* and breakfast. I was spending it on a long letter to Japan, and she in writing a short story about the Man from Missouri and me, in which I was called Barbara, and was most flatteringly described as an "American girl who looks like a Beardsley poster, with quantities of sunny hair and the sweetest temper in the world." It was safe to write about the Man from Missouri, inasmuch as he had by this time departed, in search, I fancy, of ladies less disconcertingly high-brow, and equally safe to discuss me, when she was so choice in her adjectives. Just as I had stopped to speculate upon a further invasion of marble halls, in flew a telegram from Herbert.

"If you wish to leave India within a year," it said, "return to Calcutta at once."

There was no time to wonder about its meaning—indeed I scarcely dared to. The immediate necessity was action, and, calling Abdul, we proceeded to hurry him

as that potentate had never been hurried in his life. In the midst of the resultant whirl, Beatrice, having withdrawn to a safe corner to contemplate railroad schedules, announced:

"Marjorie, we can still see the Taj Mahal."

"I only want to see Japan," I said.

But she persisted. If we got the train that left in the direction of Agra in an hour, we should be in Agra at noon, see the Taj in the afternoon, start southward on the night train, and arrive in Calcutta as quickly as by any route.

"Inasmuch as that train leaves first, let's do it," I said. "It will be a comfort to feel ourselves moving in any direction."

An hour later we arrived at the station breathless. There stood the train, all ready to pull out.

As we were speeding to the ticket-window the British government intercepted us in the shape of a shy young passport official who must forthwith know our history and business. Our history was of no importance. As for our business, we had none. We were Americans, and, if necessary, we could be persuaded to confess our age. This didn't look impressive on a report, especially in the days when it was still the duty of his office to discover as many German spies as possible, or, barring that, to fix pacifism or other doctrines on each newcomer.

While he was still probing our history for really significant detail, the train gave a jerk, Abdul shouted frantically, "*Memsahib!*" and in one inconsiderate leap we landed on the steps of a first-class carriage to which Abdul was clinging, and rode blandly away, leaving the British government gaping. Then it occurred to us that we had no tickets. But no one came to question our right to be there, and we proceeded without molestation

to Agra. When we got off there, we walked through the gate serenely, in undisturbed enjoyment, apparently, of a free ride from Delhi. Then my innate honesty asserted itself:

"Beatrice," said I, "we really ought to pay for our tickets."

She was inclined to think that since the British government had done its best to prevent us from getting to Calcutta in time, and since we had escaped on a government railroad, we were quits. But I had a conscience. So I walked up to the Babu in charge of the ticket-window and laid down the price for two first-class tickets and a servant's ticket. He looked embarrassed.

"I must collect a fine," said he. "Thirteen rupees."

"Why?"

"Because you did not buy your tickets in Delhi."

We explained that we had been prevented by the lack of intelligence in the British government, which had neglected all its good chances to investigate us when we did not happen to be in a hurry. We said he ought to be grateful for the privilege of dealing with honest folk who paid their debts without being asked, and we did not propose to pay a fine. He said he could not register the ticket as paid in Agra without adding the penalty; some one must pay those thirteen rupees. We laid down the just price for the tickets and departed.

After lunch a servant came rushing up to us in great embarrassment. There was some one to see the memsahibs, he said; the memsahibs must come down at once. We went down to find a Babu protesting to all the multitude that we were thieves and robbers and dangerous enemies of the government. He was from the railroad, and he must have that fine. We stood on our honesty, and refused.

Then he broke down: "Ah, memsahib, me poor man—very poor. You not pay, me pay. Government, he will collect. Ah, memsahib, me have wife, two wives, and many sons; if I pay, they starve. Ah, memsahib, you pay those thirteen rupees, and every day I pray to God for you. Ah, memsahib, me poor, very poor, but me pray to God."

Wrathfully we entered a carriage and rode to the station. When we reached there, we found that we were notorious characters. The whole army of Indian officials came out to view such examples of crime. We explained and explained. But in vain. We might have got away without paying for tickets at all. From the railroad's point of view we should then have been nonexistent. But it was a rule that if any one rode from Delhi to Agra without first getting a ticket, he must pay a fine. By offering to pay, we had confessed our iniquity. Therefore the fine must follow.

At last, surveying the uniform tint of dark brown in the faces around her, Beatrice said with majesty: "If there is a white man in this place, lead us to him."

There was a discussion. One white man did exist, it seemed. At last the dusky procession escorted us through one dingy room after another till we came to a lanky Englishman, seated in an inner sanctum among books and papers. In a great flood of Oriental eloquence our sins and robberies were explained to him. He looked at us severely as one about to administer the utmost rigour of the law. We told our story. He heard it with the solemnity of a judge. Then a funny little smile flickered over his face.

"It's fatal to be honest in India," he said.

He looked the record of the ticket-agent through care-

fully: "Two ladies, first class, and servant—fine thirteen rupees."

"The Babu is right," he said. "If we collect for the tickets, we must show the fine."

He did some lightning arithmetic, and then turned to the Babu dramatically:

"Babu," he said, pointing to us, "what do you see?"

"Two memsahibs," said the Babu meekly.

"No," said he, "you are mistaken—you see only one lady."

"Yes, sahib," said the Babu, salaaming humbly. "I see one memsahib."

"And how did this one lady travel to Agra?"

"First class, sahib."

"No, Babu," replied the Englishman. "You are strangely misinformed. She travelled second class with one servant."

"Yes, sahib; one memsahib, second class, with one servant."

"Babu," said he, looking at the receipts for the money we had paid that morning, "I am amazed at you. This record is plainly incorrect. Whereas there was only one lady travelling second class, you have written that there were two travelling first class. All these Babus can see that it is incorrect." And he indicated the crowd of witnesses, who, looking blandly at Beatrice and me, were now ready to swear that we two were one.

"Yes, sahib," said they, in one lying chorus, "the record is wrong. We see one memsahib, who travelled second class."

"Now, this one memsahib, who travelled second class, with one servant, will pay the fare from Delhi to Agra with the penalty. Make out the record."

The Babu made the record. It came to exactly thirteen rupees *less* than we had paid that morning for our two first-class tickets.

The Englishman surveyed the new receipt. "What's this?" he asked. "You told me the lady owed you thirteen rupees. By this it is plain that we owe her thirteen rupees. Pay them to the lady."

Meekly the Babu produced thirteen rupees. The Englishman handed them to us, bowing. "Sorry," said he. "I'm afraid this doesn't compensate for the trouble."

So saying, he turned abruptly to his desk, and the company escorted us out, bowing, smiling, beaming, with Oriental enjoyment of this thoroughly Oriental bit of trickery. . . .

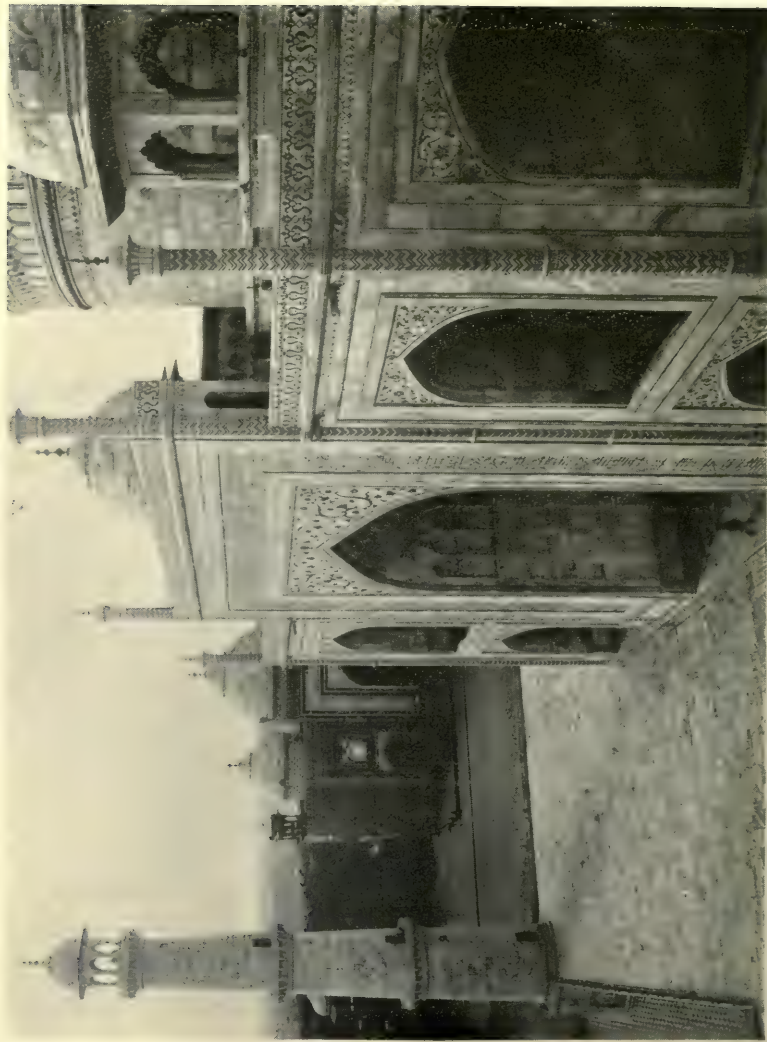
A few minutes later the memory of this comedy died in silence and pure awe; for Beatrice and I stood beneath the Taj Mahal, the memorial of human love that we had come so far to see. Again and again the Taj has been called the most beautiful piece of architecture in the world; yet all the pæans of architects and scribblers and the inarticulate raptures of tourists cannot prepare one for its utter loveliness.

Standing so delicate and white against the blazing blue of the sky, so set apart from all the world by its mirroring waters and cypress trees, it seems to shine like an angel with some inward light, to be itself instinct with pure passion. There is a lyrical grace in its white springing towers and snowy domes, in the exquisite detail of the carven walls and flowerlike columns. It has the quality of a song, a love-song bursting spontaneously from the heart. One would fancy that only spirits could have built it, and that it rose, as some old temples are said to have risen, like an exhalation from the earth to the sound of fairy music. Standing beneath it, I



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Standing so delicate and white against the blazing blue
of the sky



Afterward we wandered through the palaces where that queen had lived

thought of snowy-mountain peaks which touched me with such awe as I then felt, of the pure crown of Fuji, of the flashing heights of Popocatepetl, but they all seemed crude, careless, rough-hewn, against the sublimity of this white thing that the hands of mortal man had fashioned.

"I wish I had been that woman," said Beatrice, "to have been so greatly loved."

"I wish I had been the man who made it," I answered.

Tradition says that he was Austin of Bordeaux, who, coming to this far land long ago, had caught and enshrined forever the utter adoration of a man for his dead love. Above the gladness of a lady so honoured,—if her disembodied soul could know the honour,—above the pride of the great king who had paid for a perfect monument to the queen of his heart, must have been the joy of the artist in the lovely thing.

"I should think his spirit would haunt this place forever," I said to Beatrice, "adoring the work of his own hands."

Afterward we wandered through the palaces where that queen had lived. She had been no idle pampered lady, for she had insisted on going with her prince on all his military expeditions, and almost every year she had given him a little princeling or princessling, as sign and symbol of the love that was between them. And so she had died long before old age had a right to claim her, worn out in the only service that the loving women of old times knew.

Yet she had been a queen and heir to many queens who dwell within those marble halls. We saw the tiny mosque where she had worshipped, within the great outer fortress of the royal walls, delicate as a temple carved from a single pearl. We saw the marble baths

that once showered rosewater upon her, and the pavilions where her children had played, inlaid with lotus flowers in carnelian, jade, and malachite, and starred with precious stones.

Other queens had made these lovely places famous—Nurmahal, and that Hindu bride of Akbar, and even a Portuguese princess who introduced crucifixes to scandalize the devout sons of the prophet. There were the chambers they had occupied, still bearing traces of their whims and pleasures. There was the room with its marble floor laid out in squares, whereon the queens played chess, with their maidservants as living pawns. Many a tragic story of sons that grew up to break their father's hearts lingered among these royal relics, and wayward ghosts seemed to lurk, still impenitent, in silent corridors.

These stories were all retailed to us by a grey-beard son of the prophet whom we found sitting lonely among the ruins. He had small interest in queens, save to lament that a wise king like Akbar could ever have fallen victim to the wiles of a heathen princess, a Hindu or a Portuguese. With sorrow he pointed out the shrines that had held "idols." But he was full of the dramatic encounters of father and son, and of councillors of state with princes and self-willed monarchs. With delight he pointed out a sloping ascent to a throne. There was a Hindu who would not bow before the Mohammedan emperor. But when he had come into the royal presence, he had toiled up this ascent and so had bowed against his will and knowledge, and the pride of monarchy was satisfied. At every marble entrance our old story-teller would stand and declaim, with fiery exchange of dramatic dialogue, the family secrets of the proud race that had lived here long ago. So Homer must have sung of

the exploits of Troy. So the Hebrew fathers must have told to their children the story of Moses, of David, of Esther.

And while we listened, the British Tommy who had been detailed to escort us smiled with the superiority of a son of London to mere fairy tales, and, twirling a silver-headed cane which seemed oddly at variance with his uniform, spat casually at the jewelled flowers that adorned these haunts of the old-time queens. He too was a sample of the way in which the Englishman rules India. For when we had arrived at the great outer wall of the palace, we had learned that we could not enter without a pass. The pass must be obtained at the police-station before two o'clock in the afternoon. (It was then three, and we were leaving at midnight.) All this the Tommy on guard explained with the nonchalance peculiar to Tommies. We were determined not to yield. Patiently we listened while the law was explained to us. After the experience of the morning we had begun to feel that there were possibilities which did not always meet the eye in English laws administered by Englishmen.

So Beatrice, summoning the witchery she did not hesitate to use on occasion, smiled sweetly into the eyes of the stubborn Tommy and asked, gently: "But surely *you* could do something about it, just to help and oblige us."

"Might cut some red tipe," said he, with a gleam of a smile on his crude features. Forthwith he sent us through the gates without further ado, under the escort of another Tommy, who had nothing at all to say for himself, but seemed to serve all inquiring sentinels in lieu of an official pass. A wonderful race, these Englishmen! They don't need sensible laws, because

they are so intelligent about disobeying those they have.

At sunset we stood on the marble balcony where attendants had brought out the bed of the dying king that he might look out over the waters to the Taj, and pass out of life with his eyes upon its shining towers. It was now no longer white, but delicately coloured by the sunset, and bloomed out of the blue distance with the soft flush and life of a rose. We saw it once more in the starlight. The waters at its feet were studded with burning points of light, and the spangled heavens sparkled around it. In the darkness it seemed like a lovely ghost, shimmering, alive, elusive.

Under its dim towers we lingered till the gates without were closed at midnight, and then we started on a swift and wild excursion back to Calcutta and Herbert and the ship that was to bear me to Japan.

CHAPTER XLVI

LADDIE

OF all the nights of my Oriental wanderings, that was the longest, though its terrors were only psychological. The train pulled out at two o'clock in the morning; and Beatrice and I, having begun the evening with ghostly communings with the Taj, roamed aimlessly around the station for two mortal hours, feeling desperately alone and charterless.

For we knew nothing of Agra. We had neither friends nor guidance, and a weary journey of two days lay before us. This northern land was very different from Calcutta. There was an amazing number of great turbaned creatures with firearms about; and by night, in the eyes of two homeless ladies, their doings seemed fearful and mysterious, and their language harsh and secret. Moreover the night was cold, and cold adds strangely to the sense of desolation and terror. In tropical darkness there is something warm, human, caressing that allays one's fear.

"May I find you some tea?" asked a voice from the shadows. It was "Laddie," a gentle Scotch boy in a lieutenant's uniform whom we had met that afternoon at the hotel. After fighting three years in France and being wounded (and, incidentally, tended in his pain by the Empress Eugénie herself), he had been quite unceremoniously transferred to India. He didn't like it, and didn't know why he was there. His psychology, in fact, was rather mixed, as was so often the case with

the finer boys who had gone through these years. He was shy and melancholy and full of brooding thoughts, which found expression only now and then in broken phrases and remarks which he covered as soon as uttered by descent to platitudes and the commonplace.

The warmth with which we met the suggestion of tea made him blush and smile with pleasure. He disappeared and shortly returned with a sleepy "boy" bearing a concoction which, on any civilized table, would have been poison and anathema, but which at that moment seemed to exude utter comfort with its steam. With it came bananas, bread, and buffalo butter. Glee-fully we placed it on a trunk, and, lighting it with a lantern, camped on some other luggage and drank it merrily. There in the coldness and the darkness our hearts warmed to each other. We discussed a thousand things which find small place in tea-table conversation by day—love, war, ethics, and religion. He had hardly talked to a girl for years, he said. He told us about his mother and his younger sister, with little broken references to the war. And in all his words and manner there were a shy protecting tenderness and gratitude and wonder that we should condescend to talk to him at all.

Then it developed that he, too, was going to Calcutta. Through all that long lonely journey he would be on the train. I could feel relief in all Beatrice's being. Poor girl! She had no such background of unescorted wandering as mine to support her against the terrors that always invade the night in lonely places. For hitherto Herbert had been with her in her Eastern travels. This tour of ours was, for her, pure heroism.

At two o'clock in the morning Laddie left us in our carriage, and the train pulled out into sharp cold darkness. Beatrice had discovered that we were the only

women on board. In a big American Pullman this would not have been so disconcerting. But locked up in the little carriage, with no immediate way of calling a conductor or a porter, we felt alone and helpless. It was all right, so long as the train kept moving. But when it stopped, as it seemed to do every few minutes, in the midst of dark plains, we seemed to be mobbed by wild men without. Huge turbaned creatures, apparently with firearms, would rattle our windows and try our doors. Probably their only purpose was to see that we were unharmed, for white women on an Indian railway are carefully protected. Every railroad official knows where they are and who they are and is held responsible for their safety. But we had no way to tell friends from enemies. Once the train stopped with a jerk, and Beatrice shrieked. I opened my eyes to see a fierce dark bandit standing in our doorway.

"Oh, come in," said I casually, sitting up.

He salaamed and withdrew. Beatrice scolded me in a temporary fury of terror, asking me what I meant by inviting villains in like that. "He was a train official," I said, guessing rashly.

After three hours we were suddenly dumped out at a little station in the chill of the hour preceding dawn. We were to change to another train and look at a sweep of dark prairie beneath the cold stars, till it arrived. Laddie appeared. He was shivering and not at all sure of his bearings, either, but we hailed him warmly as a friend and deliverer.

"The question is," he said, "where can we get hot tea?"

Even here this blessed institution of British India proved to be available in strong black cupfuls served by a shadowy figure from a white pitcher. We warmed our hands against the sides of the cup, and thawed out in

the steam, and scalded our throats deliciously. The tea once consumed, we relapsed into forlorn chilliness. Some distance away we saw a pail of hot charcoal near which two Afghans wrapped in great shawls lay sleeping.

"Let's get them to share it with us," said Laddie.

We established ourselves next to them. They rolled over with quick motions of self-defence, glared at us wildly, and then, seeing why we had come, hospitably made room for us among their shawls, smiled with a flash of white teeth in the dimness, and went back to sleep.

This was a little more comfortable. The sight of the burning coals seemed itself to warm us, and we hoarded each slight wave of heat in our muffling coats. By this time it seemed as if the night had lasted an eternity. The day and its experiences seemed like something in another life, and we felt as if we should never see the sun again. But there was a mutual comfort and tenderness in each other's presence; and we were grateful to the gentle boy who shadowed us so protectingly.

Our train came at last, and eventually the dawn. With it our senses returned, and the terrors fled away. The landscape looked rather commonplace, like a neglected corner of Kansas, and by day the pirates and bandits who infested the night turned out to be train-guards and servants. We invited Laddie to share our carriage during the day, and amused each other with all the silly games we could think of and with reading the cheap novels in shilling editions that Laddie collected from wayside news-stands. Like tea, shilling novels are one of the ubiquitous comforts with which the Englishman furnishes the wilderness. After the long and melancholy years of war, breaking so rudely

into boyhood, our gratitude and merry companionship reduced poor Laddie to a Dante-like state of humble devotion. For he was a gentleman, every inch of him, though a simple lad. Beatrice, used to dividing men into classes according to notions of continental gentry, was inclined to credit him with "gentle" birth, and some inherited estate and dignity among the barren hills of Scotland. But for aught I know his father may have kept shop in Edinburgh.

But that long day of mutual and child-like comradeship between two lonely girls and a lonely boy whom we never saw again remains in my memory as one of those beautiful human contacts which can exist only between travellers. Friendship and love must be made of stout and common stuff to stand the wear and tear of long acquaintance and full knowledge. But between strangers who but meet and pass, there may often be a momentary delicacy and romance of human kindness, some casual blossom of courtesy and gratitude which would shrivel in the rude heat and rush of real life, but which survives in enduring grace among the wanderer's memories. So in the long procession of cheap and comic men who crossed my path around the world, Laddie is one who stands a little apart, because he was gentle and modest and served us like queens and angels for a day.

Laddie's virtues were not, however, appreciated by the railroad guards. At six o'clock in the evening we stopped for dinner at a wayside town. Now, it is a rule that after twilight sets in all ladies' carriages must be guarded with fierce and moral virtue. So, after dinner, as Laddie, by our invitation, stood on the steps of the carriage talking to us, with doors wide open and the whole of India welcome to play chaperon if it would,

along came a most righteous-looking Englishman in some official garb, and, seizing him by the collar, hurled him from the steps.

"None of that, young man!" said he.

Poor Laddie's face flamed. The uniform of a lieutenant in His Majesty's army was not used to being handled like that, and for a moment we expected to be heroines of a fight. Beatrice said promptly and decisively: "Lieutenant Campbell is a friend, and we asked him to stop a minute and chat before the train leaves."

"Don't know who is, and don't care," said our self-constituted protector in a strong cockney voice. "But I knows the rules on this railroad."

Beatrice was inclined to tell him that we would manage our own affairs, but Laddie settled the matter by bowing and withdrawing.

As the train moved out and darkness fell, the ghosts of uncanny terror again began to walk abroad. Then I had an inspiration. Moving over to the bunk where Beatrice was trying to shiver herself to sleep, and piling my steamer rugs on top of hers, I took her in my arms.

Cuddling her head down against my shoulder, she went to sleep like a little girl, and thinking how soft and sweet and pretty she was, and feeling very motherly and protecting, I forgot to worry about the inexplicable happenings without, and fell asleep too. So we rode happily and warmly through the night, comforted in each other's arms.

Dawn shone hotly upon us—for we had come back into tropical country—and then the train came to with a jerk, in Calcutta. And Herbert himself was standing in the doorway, flourishing letters for me from far-off Japan, and ready to tell Beatrice how he had perished of loneliness without her. In the lovers' jubilations

which followed, some one passed us and bowed rather wistfully.

"There goes our sweetheart," said Beatrice.

"Where?" asked Herbert, glaring at a retreating back clothed in khaki. It was Laddie.

Neither Beatrice nor I ever saw him again.

CHAPTER XLVII

SUSPENSE

THE jubilations of our return were short-lived, at least for me. Even as I clutched the first letters from Sydney which I had had since I left the Philippines, I could see some shadow falling over Herbert's face.

Once or twice he started to speak, but allowed himself to be diverted by Beatrice's joyous chatter, till Beatrice herself asked, "What did you mean by scaring Marjorie to death with that telegram?"

"I am afraid it means that Marjorie must postpone her wedding," he replied soberly, and then, as I said nothing, and Beatrice suddenly reached over and took my hand between hers and held it, he plunged in. "There is no possibility of a sailing to Japan for six months. Yours was cancelled, just as I feared. I didn't tell you because I did not want to spoil your trip, and I thought I could do something, but I can't. I have turned Heaven and earth and the American consular offices upside down, and it's hopeless. There's just one chance of getting out of India, and I think you'd better take it, before the British government wakes up and makes some rule to keep you here."

"What is that?"

"A ship that sails for New York next week, via South Africa."

"South Africa," said Beatrice, "why, Herbert, you might as well talk of the South Pole."

"It is that or nothing," said Herbert, "and Sydney can

get back to New York much more easily than he can get to India."

Here then was the end of my hopes. It seemed impossible that any man should pursue a girl who had so constantly disappointed him, and all on a wild goose chase. How could I explain? A cable was no medium for delicate negotiations.

But to Herbert I merely said, "All right, I will take that."

"We will clinch it at once," he said, stopping the taxi in front of the steamship office. "Or perhaps," he added gently, "you want to cable to Sydney first."

I cabled, explaining as best I could and asking Sydney if he couldn't possibly return to New York before June. And then followed days of waiting. Morning after morning dawned, and I thought surely that sunset would see the cessation of suspense. But no answer came. Well, there was the end of it! The letters that Herbert had given me—the only real letters from Sydney I received in all this journey, with all their plans for January and after, seemed cruelly ironical.

In the interval before I sailed, some of the Americans in Calcutta, who are jute manufacturers, invited Beatrice and me to come out and stay at the beautiful homes where they keep bachelor hall. These jute dwellings stand under the very eaves of the old Serampore mission, the first American mission in India, and one of the few Protestant foundations of the sort which have nobility, dignity, and mellowness. There was something of the air of Yale and New England about the old Baptist college—an austere and honourable tradition not only of service but of learning. Near by the group of the jute manufacturers' homes stood like college fraternity buildings. And when we

were jubilantly received there by a horde of young men, and showered with all the luxury that women command in the Orient, we felt as if we had returned to the old days of the junior prom and the fraternity hop. Instead of dancing, however, we played tennis in the twilight. There was an Oriental leisure and ceremony about that tennis. Each player was attended by three turbaned lackeys. One ran after the balls; one served tea, from a little summer-house at the edge of the court; and a third stood by to fan away the mosquitoes and wrap one in sweaters the minute one paused in this elegant pursuit of exercise.

All around the jute-makers' homes—and the mission which has tried to spread the gospel of Christian justice for a hundred years—are the jute-fields which feed the American luxury that we had enjoyed. But no comfort and grace have extended beyond these American settlements. The mission has been helpless to alleviate the evils of a growing industry except with private charity. And the jute men—well, that is how fortunes are often made, and these Americans are, like the rest, individually good men and gracious hosts, but socially part of a system that feeds the rich on the very life of the poor. The condition of the jute industry is one of the many blots on capitalism abroad.

The jute country round about is a melancholy land. One drives for miles through jungly avenues. There are poor little mud houses hidden in the rank, tough vegetation, and pools of stagnant waters reflecting palms. The bright, cold, clean water of the Occident is not here, nor the clean fresh earth. Everything seems soaked with the poison of a thousand years, fetid, reeking. Draped figures sit at the roadside, begging. Drab women they are, and shameless. Those that can afford to go clad in scar-

let and purple do not show their dangerous beauty to men in India. So we saw only those too poor to care, to claim protection. Around them sprawled their naked offspring, each wearing a bangle or a chain. When we came into sight, the mothers would pull the babes out of the dust, set them on their feet, give them a little spank, and send them to beg.

One winsome lassie of three, whose costume consisted of a bracelet, had the most enticing of feminine glances, and lips sweet enough to kiss even under the dirt that covered them. Her hair curled on her head in ringlets which the light of the sun had faded on the ends to gold. She coquetted with us gleefully, scampering away to hide behind the leaves, and emerging suddenly like a little brown earth fairy—till her mother noticed our interest, and, summoning her sharply, whispered something in her ear. With her smiling lips drawn down and her sweet voice attuned to the beggar's whine, she returned to us, holding out one chubby hand tearfully, while with the other she patted her plump little waist—to suggest, apparently, the unfed cavity within.

Often the boys would run after our automobile. Lean, swift creatures they were, and they ran, begging between gasps, till they sank by the wayside panting and weeping with weariness and the beggar's self-pity. Sometimes we gave like the man in the Scriptures, worn out with overmuch importunity. And while the children shrieked at us from below, reinforced by their half-veiled mothers, the monkeys in the trees above gravely dropped leaves upon us, and cursed us in all the tongues of the *bander-log*.

These were mostly hangers-on of families working at starvation wages in one of the most prosperous of Indian industries, an industry which piles up fortunes

for white men almost overnight. Here and there we saw the jute-fields tended by people wretchedly poor. And looking at them, I thought of the jute-mills, of the pregnant women working there, of children sprawling there, crying for the sweet warm touch of the tired breasts of mothers who could not heed them because they were too busy making white men rich. Then I thought of the beautiful bungalows where I had enjoyed the utmost luxury that chivalry could command or the lonely white man in exile throw at the feet of woman—I thought of all this as I rode away from scenes of gaiety and hospitality. So white men have done in the Orient, knowing nothing of “welfare laws” and eight-hour days, drawing the blood of many dusky women and little children that one lady of their own may go shining in jewels and sleep delicately at night, and ride softly by day, looking ruefully and helplessly upon the poverty that feeds her wealth.

It is no one man’s doing—it is the fault of things as they still are.

CHAPTER XLVIII

SCANDALS

THE day of my sailing had come. Beatrice escorted me to the ship, and one of my kind hosts of the jute firm sent roses to perfume my prospects. And truly my prospects needed some grace. No answer from Sydney had come. Probably he thought I was not worth it, and I scarcely blamed him. The ship to which I was indefinitely committed was a shabby little thing which looked capable only of busy-body ministrations between river ports. Nor did my fellow passengers seem more promising. They had the appearance of a collection of characters made up for a stock company production.

As we stood there, waiting for the ship to cut loose from the docks, Herbert came shouting up the gang-plank waving a cablegram.

"I knew it," he cried. "That bally black boy delivered it in the wrong place—and somebody's fool servant signed for it, and I have had all the detective forces known to myself and Abdul after it ever since."

Worse than that, I afterwards discovered, for it had been returned to Japan, and had come back! While he spoke, I was tearing open the envelope. The first word sent my spirits up to the sky, and the second even higher; for the first word was "distraught," and the second "despair"—and this is not the sort of vocabulary that confirms one's worst apprehensions in such cases.

"Would any one but a literary man use *distraught* in

a cablegram," I said joyously to Beatrice, as I gave her the message to read.

"No one short of a poet," she answered.

The cable went on to say that Sydney could not reach New York till the middle of the next summer and then—! I gave copy for an answering cable to Herbert, spending a good many dollars trying to make it sound human, and turned back with joy to the little ship. Even South Africa looked hopeful now.

Nor was that the end of good fortune.

A rosy, dark-eyed man in the ship's uniform approached us. He was, he said, a Yorkshire "mon," and first cousin to one of the most famous of living authors, and he proceeded to prove the kinship by the display of an indubitable gift o' gab. When I remarked on the prospects of South Africa, he exclaimed:

"What, haven't ye heard? This ship's not going to South Africa. She's going through the Canal. Aye, aye, first passenger ship through in eighteen months! She's to pick up the leavin's of the war."

"Through the Suez Canal and the Mediterranean!" I cried.

The Cousin had by this time grown cautious. "So they say. This isn't official I'm giving you. We don't know where we're going—understand. The Captain's just got sailing orders to the next port, and no farther."

"But ultimately we shall reach New York?"

"Maybe so. Maybe so. I couldn't rightly say."

But his wink was reassuring, and Beatrice, her eyes bright with thoughts of Egypt and Italy, whispered, as she kissed me good-bye, "I envy you."

Into the warm twilight I steamed out alone on this, my last adventure. For a few moments the smoke and mists that presage the darkness in Calcutta hung over

the city, rosy still with sunset, and pierced by the lights of a million fires. Standing on the little deck, and watching the stars take full possession of the night, I felt like Columbus going forth to discover America. The ship was barely larger than his, I believe, and my course scarcely less uncertain. Like him, perhaps, on his first night out, my thoughts clung to the idea that the world is really round. I wonder whether those reverend men who argued the matter long ago thought of the romantic comforts latent in that truth. For every league that was taking me from Japan now was yet, by that magical principle, bringing me nearer to it. And in that thought I found a consolation Columbus himself, it may be, did not know.

When I turned in from the balmy darkness, I found my cabin pre-empted by a sort of gipsy. A strange, dusky creature she was, with the regular features of the Punjab and a velvety manner. As if to forestall any conclusions of my own regarding her race, she promptly announced that her mother was a Greek and her father an Englishman. In the Orient the half-caste is always an outcast—doubly outcast, denied alike by the mother's and the father's people. And those doomed to wear out their lives on this lonely and sorrowful borderline between the averted faces of two races are glad enough to escape by fictitious heraldry. Yet I noticed that her accent was quite free from the curious cadence of the native born. To celebrate our prospective alliance as cabin-mates, she was ordering unlimited champagne and moselle. Between sips she began to scatter jewels about in starry confusion. Gifts of her husband, she said—an Englishman, very stiff, very earnest and good, and passionately in love with her. She was passionately in love, too, she announced, and she wanted to

know whether I had any experience with this psychological condition.

All night she tossed and moaned, and murmured that she missed her husband. With the first streak of dawn she called to the cabin-boy, "Boy, a ci'grette, please." When the smoke, ascending and encircling my bunk, stirred me to some demonstration of my presence in the world, she said she hoped that I should never be so much in love, and that I should be married as soon as possible, because she never saw a nice girl without wishing her married. And with that she called the boy and told him to bring me a ci'grette, too, please.

When I appeared for breakfast, I found that we were stuck in the mud of the Hoogly River. There for two days we stayed, with nothing except blank yellow water and a blanker yellow landscape to divert us, till a great wave came in from the sea and washed us out. During these two days I had time to plumb the depths of the ennui which apparently was to be my fortune for the next sixty days.

The first day promised something worse than ennui. A rumour went abroad through the ship that I was anti-British, and was investigated by the Captain with all due solemnity. Inasmuch as I had only the most amiable sentiments toward his Majesty's subjects I was rather puzzled till I discovered that the story originated with one I had dubbed Circe. Circe had the same ethnological background as my cabin-mate, but of course she said that her mother was a Russian. She had a homely dark face and an enticing figure of whose charms she allowed no one to remain in ignorance. And her cultivation of the men on board was systematic. When her husband, a burly, crude Englishman, had brought her on board the first night, he had glanced around the deck at

our grotesque collection of men, and had remarked with an expression somewhere between a sneer and a leer: "Well, I guess you're safe this trip." Apparently she was rather more hopeful. For the advantage of a passing Briton before whom she was flaunting her banners the next day, she remarked to me that she *adored* Englishmen.

"Oh, yes," I answered. "An Englishman is all right when he is a good man. But he doesn't know how to be devilish with any grace."

On the whole I thought that was rather a compliment to the race. But she reported to the Captain, whom she was cultivating, that he must watch me carefully, because I was anti-British. The Captain was a helpless little Welshman, with eyes of infantile blue and soft pink complexion. Greatly flustered, and apparently believing that I carried bombs and a wireless equipment all my own, he came trotting around to inquire. I answered that he was mistaken. At last, being somewhat pressed and irritated, I added, with some hauteur, that I could probably boast a better English pedigree than any Briton on board. Whereupon the Cousin appeared, looked rather startled, asked if any of my family belonged to Yorkshire; and when I said yes, he announced that, though he didn't claim to be a gentleman himself, thank God, he wasn't one to stand by and see the gentry of Yorkshire insulted by Welshmen and Russians. This put a quietus on the inquiry for the time.

However, Circe was not allowed to flourish her tongue with impunity. She attached a lover at last, an anemic American with pale red hair. His experience was apparently limited to a small town in Ohio, a Childs restaurant in New York, and a clerkship in Calcutta. But she announced that he was very rich in his own country

and had promised to introduce her to various members of the Four Hundred. Such misapprehensions are one of the characteristics of these sordid adventures, especially between people whose difference of nationality allows for no checking up of each other's boasts. Though he seemed a poor sort for such a lively creature, his fate was soon irrevocably bound with hers. For the matrons on board woke up and decided that these two must be ostracized.

It is rather hard to ostracize two people in a space no larger than a city apartment. One cannot help looking across the table at them three times a day. But ostracized they were, and a terrible thing it was to see. Absolutely committed as they were to each other's sole company, imprisoned within the space of deck and tiny social hall and omitted from every social event, yet forced to witness them, knowing no relief all day long from the deadly presence of each other, no marriage on earth could have been a closer or more ghastly bond for the time being. All that makes even a loveless marriage tolerable, in the way of variety of scene and society and outlook, and interests outside of each other's company, was here lacking.

The matrons who thus protected our morals were two, and both of them American and Irish and residents of Brooklyn. They made up for virtue and the possession of obvious husbands by acidity of tongue and competition in impressing the British community with their high social position at home. Their chaperonage of us was rather negative. While they brought the rigours of the social law down on Circe, they did nothing to protect the one lone girl among them—beyond insinuating that she was evidently a snob, and probably not so much of a prude as she looked.

Meanwhile my roommate (whom I called Medea, because of the testimony of her tongue that she was Greek, and her face that she was Oriental) found a physician for her passion for her husband in the Cousin. He knew how she felt about her husband, he said, because he felt that way about his wife, who was a golden-haired angel, he said, and pure as dew, and the fact that she was now expecting her baby so far from him would not let him sleep o' nights. So he used to come along in the evenings and condole with Medea through the keyhole.

Then he began to get very anxious about my welfare. Wouldn't it be nice if I had a cabin all to myself? Two ladies couldn't enjoy sharing a tiny cabin in such hot weather. Finally he announced that he had arranged it. Great is the power of an officer on the ship. I was soon installed alone in another and better place, and Medea and the Cousin were left to console each other without the difficulties of chaperonage.

A few days later the School for Scandal decided they too must be ostracized. Thereupon Medea began to reign like a queen, though outlawed. She received all her meals in her own cabin, or shared them with the Cousin in his quarters; and the stewardess, a blooming little English woman with the instincts of a discreet ladies' maid, was at her special service. And sundry dainties denied to the rest of us made part of her out-classed feasts. Still, I must say, she was a good sort. She behaved always with dignity and quietness and generosity. She indulged in no scandal or other unpleasant remarks and in no recriminations on the subject of other ladies. The Cousin, of course, discovered that she was related to all the celebrities of India, British and native. But he suffered from dark and tragic moods of remorse—at which times he said he was

thinking of his wife and she was an angel, God bless her.

While all these dramas were unfolding, we had extricated ourselves from the mud, on the morning of the third day, and were slipping over a colourless languid sea, beneath a colourless languid sky, to Colombo, in the Island of Ceylon. Having exhausted the social possibilities of the ladies on board, I began to observe the gentlemen with more attention. Odd, weatherbeaten creatures they seemed, interested mainly in whiskey or vulgar gossip. The two husbands appeared to be a better sort, but they were tame attachments to their wives and members of the School for Scandal. There was one exception, a tall, blue-eyed lad, just a boy, but every bit a gentleman. The lack of decent society on shipboard seemed to have converted a slight youthful shyness into reserve, and he moved around in an orbit of his own, which seldom crossed mine. To myself I called him N. B., Nice Boy, and took a secret pleasure in the fact of his wholesome presence. Among the others who stood out by reason of some special distinction, there were also a padre, and the drunken ship's doctor, who had some reminiscences of a gentleman about him.

When Sunday came, and there was no cessation in the unholy activities of the ship, the padre decided that something should be done. So he hung up a sign to the effect that service would be held in the social hall at seven-thirty. Seven-thirty came, and so did the padre, all dressed for the occasion—but not the shadow of a congregation. Below, Medea was dining with the Cousin; in a dark corner of the deck Circe, all dressed in chiffon, was whispering to her American. A crowd was gathered around a table adorned with whiskey and soda and cards. And there sat the poor padre alone, in his

garments of sanctity, while the hand of his watch crept on toward eight. I knew what glee there would be in the ship next day when it was reported that the padre had held a service and nobody had come, and I thought the reprobates ought not to be allowed to put it over. While I inwardly execrated the poor judgment of the man in putting his sacred function to such insult, I thought that two or three perhaps might come, if they had a leader, including, possibly, the School for Scandal, which liked to appear virtuous. Suddenly a spirit of mischief possessed me. I flew down the deck.

"On my word," I said blandly to Circe, "is this the way you spend Sunday evening?"

The American dropped her hand, and a blush of deep brick-red dyed his face. "Don't you know there is a service to-night and every one is expected to go?"

Meek and shamefaced, they arose and went! None so weak before such exhortations as the guilty, as every downtown evangelist knows! I am afraid the glee with which I travelled on to the next group of sinners is not recorded to my credit in the books of Heaven. When I intruded on the cards and whiskey, the drunken doctor jumped up and said of course he was coming to service. He used to go with his mother, God bless her. And he led his delegation in. Meanwhile the loiterers about the deck saw people gathering and strayed in. The Doctor apparently regarded himself and me as master and mistress of ceremonies, and taking me by the arm, he made me stand up in the front row and sing all the hymns with him in a very loud voice.

So we held service, and I am sorry to record that no sinner was turned from his evil courses in consequence. The main result was that I made the acquaintance of the old Doctor, which, in the end, led to a far less edify-

ing episode. For he chose to declare himself to all the ship a victim of a hopeless, though purely imaginary, passion for myself. He elaborated on this in a myth-making, hyperbolical spirit, whenever he got a good glass of whiskey—and the ship's officers thought his sentimental confidences amusing. He began by calling me *Light of His Eyes*, which he later changed to *Light That Failed*. It was not so entertaining to me as to him, but the final results, which I will tell later, rather cleared the murky air of the ship.

After about a week a new scandal went abroad through the ship. The Captain, it was said, had lost his way. For among the other sources of peace and harmony among us was a standing feud between the Captain and some of his officers.

"We should be in Colombo to-day," said the Cousin. "But God knows where we are."

This was cheerful news. If we got lost before we reached Colombo, the prospects of finding New York via South Africa seemed pretty slim. Or was it by Suez that we were going?"

But twilight brought out of the mists lights that were more than stars, and it seemed we had reached Colombo after all. All night we lay at the gates of the shadow that morning would make yet another new land, and in the stillness my nerves so long inured to the throbbing of the ship and the hiss of the sea seemed to wait in a mood of tense expectancy, as if for some strange fortune that the silence might bring.

Next morning revealed a sunny little town, beyond the tossing waves of the harbour, and palms silhouetted against the pure bland sunlight of a tropical island. Cheerful black boys in gay petticoats and skull caps came around to row us to shore, and naked little crea-

tures, many of whom had left arms or legs with the sharks, offered to dive for coins. Barring pennies, they would like a ci'grette, please. They had a gaiety and impudence quite foreign to the sombre inhabitants of India, and their command of English was excellent.

CHAPTER XLIX

AT THE GATES OF THE FAR EAST

THE great continent we know as India has some graceful attachments. One of these is Burma, and another is Ceylon. Ceylon is a lovely island, lying to the southeast of the mainland of India, and so crowned with hills and rimmed with the tossing sea that its sunshine has a purity and zest which are denied to the dank and feverish heats of equatorial lands. The inhabitants are a negroid people, cheerful, cleanly, and prosperous, and rather better initiated into the ways and speech of their English masters than the people of India proper. From end to end of the island the beautiful land yields up its romantic and princely gifts—tea, spices, and jewels. It is the Indian strand that the old mariners dreamed of, and Columbus himself set forth to find; and the utmost reaches of covetous imagination scarcely exaggerated its beauty and its wealth.

Yet its greatest distinction, to my mind, is the grandeur of its contact with its environing seas. Other tropical islands seem often to melt and swoon into the sea, or lie in waveless waters as in a quiet lake. Ceylon yields in no such easy dalliance. Cool, barren, aloof, the eternal sport of winds that no sunshine can win to gentleness, and of waves which the balms and spices of the sweet air of the isle can never soothe to rest, the great sands stretch shining into the tossing sea. Row on row, the palms stand with heads bent forward before the everlasting winds, and the sea beats on the land with a lonely

boom, boom. After riding through the sweet countryside, through cinnamon fields, and lands where the tea stands in long rows like a series of green sofa cushions, through warm folds of the valleys and the swarming, living jungle, it was always a strange and stirring experience to come out upon that solemn shore.

We stayed in Ceylon three or four days, during which time our scandals removed themselves to hotels, and we had peace. Though my days consisted in quiet contemplation of gems and palms and sea, the last night was enlivened with a variety of experience. For N. B., with whom I had hitherto sustained only the most formal courtesies of shipboard, suddenly asked me whether I would go on shore with him and seek out the theatre which was rumoured to function in this wilderness. Assenting gladly, I set forth with a joyous sense of freedom from the annoyances of the vulgar and sophisticated society I had known so long. When we got into our rickshaw, we particularly instructed the boy that we were seeking a theatre—a t-h-e-a-t-r-e—and he said he understood perfectly. Whereupon he started directly away from the lights and traffic of the town and the sparkle of our ship in the harbour waters, down a dark and jungly road. "Boy," said we sternly, "it is a theatre that we seek." Did he understand? He understood perfectly, and continued on his way.

Around us closed in the shadows of the jungle so deep that our eyes could not pierce the darkness save where a Buddha tree covered with great waxen white flowers shimmered wanly and dropped its petals upon us. Once we came out upon the sea, and saw the great palms, black, lonely, remote, against the sky, and heard the boom, boom, boom of the sea upon the shore. What had this to do with footlights and paint? Again we ex-

postulated. Again the boy swore that this was the route to the theatre, and to demonstrate his understanding of our wish, stopped short and gave us a little dramatic exhibition. Helplessly we signalled him to move on, and picking up his feet as blithely as a horse going home, he plunged yet deeper into the darkness. Then there was a flicker, a glow—and a square little wooden shack dimly lit. This, said he, depositing us with an air of triumph, was the theatre. And it was!

I am afraid that we bought our tickets with some feeling of condescension, and strolled down the aisle to the orchestra seats with the air of Broadway accidentally walking into a ten-cent movie at Hayseed Corners. But our pride promptly received a tumble. For every one of those among whom we aspired to sit was in full dress. There they sat, stiff, red-faced English women in décolleté black gowns and puffy men in white shirt-fronts, and as we sat down, twenty frozen stares surveyed our sporting costumes from the Oxfords on our feet to the felt hats on our heads.

The time at which the performance began was as formal as the dress. There was nothing till half-past nine. Inasmuch as it would take an hour to return, and we must be on shipboard by eleven, or be forced to stay on shore to the delight of the School for Scandal, we only came, and looked, and were conquered by that costumed assemblage.

When we reached the ship, we found a turmoil. The Doctor in a state of undress was standing like a tall ghost, swearing that he would jump overboard, while the rest of the ship stood round and dissuaded him in chorus. It seems that he had lost his cane—which came from South Africa and was made of rhinoceros-skin and tipped with silver—in the sea. While the second mate

was demonstrating the kind and variety of man-eating sharks which inhabited those waters, and ate the arms and legs and sometimes the whole bodies of the boys that dived for us, as we ourselves had seen, there was a great splash. The Doctor had gone.

Some anxious minutes were spent in fishing him out. But he was rescued at last, still minus the cane, but with all his limbs about him. Thinking the excitement of the evening was now over, I went to bed. But apparently some alcohol circulated to celebrate the postponement of the Doctor's demise, for the ship got noisier and noisier, and I was awakened out of a doze to hear the stewardess whispering in a scared voice through my key-hole: "Is your door locked? Be sure you keep it locked."

Listening to the racket above, I gathered that the Doctor's boon companions, rejoicing over his safety, and rendered benevolent by alcohol, had sworn that they were all coming down to call on me and make me treat him nicely, and had actually started toward my cabin. They were intercepted by the Cousin, who sent the stewardess flying down to warn me, and administered such discipline as was at the command of a subordinate on bad terms with his captain.

Next day I found the Captain abject. The Cousin had lost no time in explaining to him just what kind of a case I had. No woman of any dignity likes to use an appeal against insult to her sex as a weapon, but it is always well for her to know its force in the laws and courts of civilized nations. I held my peace and let the Captain apologize in fear and trembling. He was a good little duffer, himself well-meaning and clean-spoken, but helpless against rowdies. Then I told him just what sort of rotters he and his mates were to allow such a situation to arise. I said that from the first I had been steadily

victimized in favour of women whose character was now sufficiently obvious. I added that I expected him as Captain not merely to see that I was let alone in person, but to suppress the kind of scandalous talk that went on aboard, at least so far as it concerned me, since this ultimately led to the kind of thing which had happened last night. Whereupon he lifted his bland blue eyes with the innocence of an ingénue of thirteen and said helplessly: "But what can I do?"

"Do?" I thought bitterly. "Pray Heaven for a new set of brains."

At this point we were happily interrupted by the arrival of a new delegation of passengers, most of whom were missionaries. Seeing the ship fall at once and completely into their possession, I decided that I would continue to try my fortunes on board. Within a few hours the place had undergone a complete moral disinfection. The scandals sank out of sight, and one felt a noticeable improvement in the quality of the whisperings. The missionaries were a kind of closed corporation, interested only in their own affairs and observances, but they brought wives and children and a wholesome family life; and against the solid front which they presented to the world, the rowdies could not prevail.

As we headed out into the Arabian sea, I felt as lonesome as ever, but comfortable and at peace. Eight days of heat and seasickness and changeless blue water brought us to the entrance of the Red Sea. Here we were held up because the Turks, in an absent-minded moment, had forgotten that the war was over, and had fired upon a transport which had gone before us. No satisfaction being obtained from Constantinople by cable, some British Tommies had been procured, who went before us and dealt out summary justice. It was soon re-

ported that the enemy was in flight and we might proceed.

So toward sunset on Christmas Eve we sailed out into the Red Sea, and awoke on Christmas morning to find the low hills of Egypt to our right, and, to the left, the barren and shining wilderness in which the Children of Israel had wandered for forty years. Looking upon those wastes of gleaming sand and desert rock, I understood why these pilgrims cried out for the fleshpots of Egypt, or at most for a spring of sweet water. There are places on the earth where three drops of dew and the light of a lonely blossom have the power to make paradise.

Meanwhile we were trying to celebrate Christmas as best we might. Our missionaries had some pretty kiddies among them who had had little opportunity to enjoy the holidays of childhood. When I reached home at last the first magazine I bought explained the history of these little ones, but left the tale half told. They were part of the company under the leadership of the "Yankee Cadi." The Yankee Cadi was a missionary doctor, who, caught on the borders between Persia and Russia, in the terrible outlying chaos of the war, had put up the American flag, and declared himself the American consul. By sheer force of the American name and his possession of supplies from the American relief, he had maintained peace and administered justice in the midst of wild and brutal conflicts of Turks and Kurds. In the magazine his story was left so. He was still holding out. But I knew the rest. For he had died at last, and his company had fled, seven months overland, to find the British forces. And this little group of women, with their children, and without the escort of a man, were some who had come to safety within the British

lines in Mesopotamia and had been transferred through India to our ship.

There was not much we could do for the children. Our supplies were beginning to suffer from the heat and the long runs between ports, and became daily less tolerable, and Christmas trees do not grow on the hills of Egypt or in the wilderness of Sinai. But the old Doctor dressed himself up in a beard and wig of white cotton batting and an astonishing scarlet costume and went about distributing little things. Then we all had a Christmas entertainment in the social hall, and the children spoke "pieces" in which Santa Claus and gentle Jesus were gloriously mixed. On this occasion an orchestra composed of the piano, tissue paper and combs, two tin pans by way of cymbals, and a red tin horn, officiated. For a time all our feuds and scandals were forgotten; Circe emerged and played the piano; Medea attended in state; and the drunken Doctor, as Santa Claus, was almost a hero.

Next day, at dawn, I looked forth to see ourselves sliding easily through the midst of the desert, as if our ship had suddenly grown wheels and taken to a career on dry land. We were in the Suez Canal. Through my porthole I could see the desert rolling away, in hills, and hummocks, and unfinished heaps of sand, copper-coloured in the light of the morning, till it lost itself in the blue distance as in the waves of a tossing sea. When I came on deck, the air that greeted me was soft and spring-like and a little cool.

There was a strange peace and intimacy in the sudden nearness to earth. Noiselessly the boat slipped along, and on both sides the land was so close that we could hold conversation as we passed with men in the little shacks on shore. It was an empty and barren country,

pure desert in the distance and decorated, near at hand, only with casual and temporary buildings and a little discouraged looking vegetation. Here and there we could see the remains of trenches and even of rusting helmets and other military gear, for all this had recently been a scene of fighting between the British and the Turks. The Captain said that on his last trip he had seen the waters dyed red with the blood of Turks, and had distributed cigarettes to fighting Tommies who swam out under the fire of the enemy to get them. As we went on, we found the banks still held by British forces, and our passage became a triumphal march like that of the returning soldiers down Fifth Avenue. For we were the first women and children who had come through for eighteen months, and the men rushed down to the shore to wave to us, and throw kisses to the little ones.

So we travelled on all day, amid smiles and greetings and kisses blown to us on the sunshine, till at evening we came out into the Mediterranean in a blaze of sand and sea and yellow sunset, and the gates of the Far East closed upon us.

CHAPTER L

“PEACE ON EARTH ; GOOD WILL TO MEN”

WHEN we sailed into the Red Sea, and I saw Egypt on one side and Arabia on the other, I felt as if I were sailing straight into the fables of my childhood. I half expected the *Arabian Nights* and my Sunday-school lessons to materialize at once and come right along with me. The faith of man is indeed weak. I perceive that I never really did believe that there was a Red Sea. I looked upon it as merely a place in the Bible, like the heavenly Jerusalem.

But if I had some difficulty in attaching to that resplendent stretch of blue water a reality outside the world of the storybook, I was really put to it when I came into Port Saïd. Port Saïd in itself has nothing of romance about it. It is a commonplace, dingy, ramshackle old town, though at the moment of our entering it was set against a background of flaming sunset. One might match it almost anywhere in the world—so nondescript it is, without feature or distinction or dignity of any kind. And yet this junk-heap among cities, this backwash of all the human débris of the Mediterranean, is the meeting-place of half the world, the gateway of the Far East and the terminus of routes into many lands endeared by song and story. Palestine, Turkey, Arabia, Egypt, Greece, Italy—all pour their wares and their peoples into this port. The pyramids and the tombs of the Pharaohs are just around the corner; the way of the cross and the place of the manger are not far beyond.

News of Bagdad and Jerusalem, of Rome and Athens, circulates freely in the street gossip. Here one walks about environed by myth and escorted by history.

And at that moment, when on Christmas night we steamed into Port Saïd, we came into a scene that will be history as long as men remember. The Christmas stars were lovely above the vulgar old town on that shining night. Never, perhaps, since the angels sang “Peace on Earth, good will to men,” have the stars of Christ’s own country looked down on men who so poignantly understood the meaning of the benediction. For here, where the dearest memories of the world meet and mingle, there was at Christmas time a meeting of many men and many ships. Six weeks after the signing of the armistice, the news had had time to reach all those little groups of men in desert and jungle who had been fighting unheralded and forgotten battles. To the borders of Persia, to the northwestern frontiers of India, to the jungles of Africa, the word had somehow gone forth, and weary men laid down their arms and straggled back to civilization. To Port Saïd on that Christmas the sand, the sea, and the savage hills of Asia gave up their dead. Men who had not been heard of for years came back as from the grave. Sometimes they came like the messenger to Job: “And I only am escaped to tell thee.”

All day long the ships were coming in from the ends of the earth, battered but triumphant, limping in with broken bows and flying flags to the music of welcoming whistles on every side. And we, in our disreputable little bark, the first to come through from India bearing women and children, found ourselves but one in a great and jubilant host. As we steamed in, in the twilight, all the harbour was glad with reunions on every deck.

As we came to anchor, a bright-faced young man in a Red Cross uniform came up the side of our ship. He was from Bethlehem, he said, and thought we might like some news. So, perching on the rail, he distributed bits of information about this one and that rescued from Turkish dungeons; another dead, perhaps, after some terrible suffering; some still in the hands of brigands. He was soon joined by a blue-eyed man whose face seemed younger than his white hair. He was a Canadian who had spent most of his last years in captivity among the Turks. At first he had been simply interned, but, after being released from that confinement, he had joined the Armenian relief. So the next time the Turks got him, they put him in prison. He was now to return with us, as an exchanged prisoner of war.

Even as we talked of these matters, and watched and speculated upon the meetings in the ships around us, and all the coming and going in the harbour, a hush fell upon the hilarious bustle. Another ship had come—a white ship of the Red Cross laden with convalescent wounded. The invalids were all out on the decks, cheering and chaffing near-by ships, as they came in; but in the eyes of the onlookers there seemed suddenly no heart for laughter. It may be that their hearts were too tender with the experience of many reunions—too sore, as yet, with fear and doubt. It was in silence, in a kind of poignant reverence, that men watched the snowy ship come in. Beautiful as an angel she seemed, pure, gracious, and triumphant, gliding into the midst of that great rejoicing, bearing safe in her arms the lives of men snatched from destruction. Night fell, and in the darkness, beneath the stars of Christmas, she seemed to brood upon the waters like a great white dove. But some time in the early dawn she stole away; nor could

we tell whence she had come and whither she had gone.

Next morning looked like old home week in Port Said. Every street corner held a congratulatory group. Everywhere the barriers between man and man, nation and nation, were down. Every one was disposed to talk, and the tiresome formalities of passport offices and customs became social occasions. As Americans we were greeted with special pleasure, for, in those days, America was still the saviour of war-wrecked Europe, and went haloed with grateful and wistful regard. A young soldier, more or less French, who looked at my pass remarked, “American? It is nice to see you here.” A distinguished-looking Armenian with melancholy eyes, who spoke English meticulously, like a professor, remarked: “You are American! Ah—that is a fine country—America. I hope one day to be myself an American.” When we returned, he again bowed and waved farewell. “I hope you will be happy in America,” he said wistfully.

Throughout the town the shabby little streets were scenes of international amity and rejoicing, full of men intent on the business of peace after the long days of war. Big Australians, in their picturesque broad hats, came blustering down the centre of the thoroughfares. The topknots of French sailors gaily speckled the crowd. Italians drank red wine in little open-air cafés. And here and there a British Tommy lingered in the shops, choosing for his girl at home a souvenir of the pyramids and the desert, little images of Moses in the bullrushes, perhaps, or the form of the suffering Christ cut out of olive wood from Jerusalem.

And amid these men so sure of their nationality, so proudly hall-marked with their place among great and haughty nations, there moved others, confused, wonder-

ing, stammering over the records of their countries and even of their very names. These were peoples of Eastern Europe, members of minor nationalities under Turkish or Russian rule, men who felt that the war had made them free, yet who scarcely knew where they were at liberty to attach themselves, or what land and government they might legitimately claim. An old man, blind in the right eye, and lame in the left leg, came hobbling into the passport office, under the escort of a small boy.

"Of what government are you a subject?" asked the official.

"I am the subject of no government," answered the old man proudly. "I am a free man."

"Yes, yes," answered the official impatiently. "So are we all, but we belong to states nevertheless. Some government must be responsible for you. Oh, I see"—looking at his pass—"this is Turkish insignia. Are you a Turk?"

"My people were long oppressed by the Turks," replied the old man. "But now they are free. I am an Armenian."

And one-eyed and lame of leg as he was, he stood there with the dignity of a very herald of liberty, and the fervency of this announcement stirred all the jejune atmosphere with a momentary sense of the drama of states and peoples.

Meanwhile through all the town and the harbour there were reunions. Wives in the arms of their husbands; sweethearts a little strained and shy after so long a separation; brothers and sisters trying to chaff each other and not to act like strangers; and mothers openly, shamelessly weeping on the shoulders of joyous, embarrassed sons. It made the lonely ones feel more lonely.

As I stood on our deck, watching these scenes aboard

our nearest neighbour, with just a little wistfulness in my own heart, a burring voice asked,

“Lassie, be *ye* spliced?”

“No,” said I, turning in astonishment.

“Neither am I, thank God.”

I surveyed the perpetrator of this announcement in amazement. He was a pallid, dazed-looking individual, in a shabby blue uniform, with the shuffling gait and uncertain movements of one who has risen from a long illness. He spoke with the voice and accent and vocabulary of a northern Englishman. He continued:

“I should be spliced now, only my girl married a schoolmaster. I went to war, and he stayed at home. So he got her. Thank God he did! Thank God he did.”

And he went away murmuring.

Afterward, as I walked around the deck, I ran into two others in the same uniform—two gnarled, knobby and ghoulisn beings, with only a kind of memory of manhood about them. Just then the Cousin, blowing past, remarked:

“See them? D. B. S. they are.”

“And what,” I asked, “is a D. B. S.?”

“Distressed British Seaman. All that’s left of many a good ship. They are washed up all along these shores, more dead than alive, and mostly soft in the head.”

“Yes, I met one like that.”

“I know. Hero of the Dardanelles, too. A shell landed on his deck, and he threw it overboard before it exploded. But his cerebrum and cerebellum are now exploded too.” And he went away, tapping his forehead with cheerful vulgarity.

We stayed in Port Saïd only long enough to rejuvenate our food a trifle, and to acquire some small bitter oranges. Little of the real Egypt came to us there—

only whiffs and scents of the life beyond, echoes of old stories, an environment of wonder, unseen, intangible. Gradually, as I walked about, a vision of a world great and strange and very old which lay just beyond, took possession of me, till I felt as if, in some sense, I did know Egypt, as I felt that I knew the Himalayas, though I saw only the clouds behind which they shone.

But our sojourn at Port Saïd allowed only for imaginary contacts. Suddenly, without warning, we were ordered on board, and within an hour were out again, skimming along over glittering blue water. The poisonous sunlight of the tropics was gone. We breathed again the ozone of the clean Western World. Soft and cool, with a spring-like freshness, the winds of the lovely Mediterranean winter blew to us over the sunny sea.

So we slipped along over the path by which long ago the Roman galleys, and the trading ships of the Greeks, went to and fro, and where later the Moorish pirates used to lie in wait for the ships bearing perfumes and spices and silks from the gorgeous East to some merchant of Venice or grandee of Genoa. At noon we passed the island of Malta, where St. Paul was shipwrecked, gleaming silvery and pearly blue above the sheen of the waters. Though there were rumours aboard of possible stops along the North African coast, at Tunis or Algiers, the ship kept steadily on. But standing on deck, in the cool sunset, I would sometimes think of the romantic coast which lay just beyond the rim of waters, where modern France has settled down like a fringe on the desert, and sends her automobiles whizzing along under the very nose of the astonished camel.

Beyond the olive orchards and vineyards, I knew, was that infinite ocean of sand which I had seen for but a moment, unique in its brilliance and its loneliness. And

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The solemn figure of the Bedouin lifts up his hands in prayer
to Allah



Once it was a granary of the Roman Empire

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there, in the lonely glow of the desert, the solemn figure of the Bedouin may be seen, dark against the sunset sky, as he lifts up his hands in prayer to Allah. For all the coast of North Africa is, in its way, a land as marvellous as Egypt, the tomb and mausoleum of a glorious past. Once it was the granary of the Roman empire, and a centre of the Latin church in the days of its first glory. Now the daisies and almond trees are blooming among the delicate ruined columns and tiled baths of the days of Roman luxury. And where Tertullian and Augustine once dreamed of conquering the world for Christ, the wild Arab boy now gathers narcissus, unchallenged and untaught.

So I would think as I stood on deck, trying to pierce the veil of shining light that was between us and those storied shores. Meanwhile our social situation had somewhat improved, through the vanishing of Circe at Port Saïd and the accession of some members of the Red Cross and our exchanged prisoner of war, who had been a missionary doctor. By dint of steadily throwing myself at his head, I had made friends with N. B., whom I may henceforth call Fred. I think he looked upon me as a designing female, and stood in mortal terror of the gossip which on shipboard pursued the most innocent companionship. Though he was still a simple youth, full of little boyish mannerisms, I began, in the close contacts of the ship, to appreciate in him the complexity and fine texture of character of a gentleman, born and bred of gentlemen.

I found some temporary occupation for my idle mind and heart in the growth of this friendship, which did something to preserve my faith, for the time, in men and the goodness of human life. For the rest, life had hardly become amusing, though the society was less ob-

noxious. Our old D. B. S. insisted on occupying the centre of the stage as a kind of unconscious clown, too pitiful to be amusing. Seventeen times a day he would go about the ship and solemnly congratulate those who were not married, and condole with those who were, repeating to each, in almost the same words, the story of his jilting. There was no turning him from the topic. It was as if the shock which had carried away the rest of his mind and recollection had left this one memory which clung too deeply to be torn away, left it exposed, without any covering of consciousness, to the world.

Apart from the shattered romance of the old D. B. S. and reminiscences among the Red Cross of the exploits of Allenby in Palestine, there was nothing new to amuse us on board, no resuscitation, even, of our old troubles. The voice of slander had sunk to a whisper, and our scandals slunk round the decks below. Only the first engineer varied the monotony by falling in love with a lady missionary, who was a sweet soul and liked to be a sister to young men, in order to keep them from falling into evil courses. The customary mystery about our destination still obtained, though it was plain that if we were to get out of the Mediterranean, we should have to stop at Gibraltar. The ship's officers, in fact, were much occupied with the problem of coal. We could not risk the Atlantic journey without more fuel. Suppose there was no coal for us at Gibraltar! Where could we go to get it, without the danger of running short en route? As for me, I began to feel as if I had been born and brought up on that ship, and all memory of life on land was but a dream and bright illusion.

Outside of Gibraltar we encountered a little excitement in the shape of our first real storm. For a day and a half we steamed against the mountainous waves and

moved onward not a step. The bow was battered to pieces, and the whole ship quaked and shivered. Then suddenly one morning we awoke to find peace upon the grey waters, and the outlines of snowy mountain heights emerging against the grey mist, like painted forms upon a curtain. Spain!

CHAPTER LI

THE ROAD TO THE ALHAMBRA

NOT till evening did we come under the shadow of that mighty rock, and see it, sombre and grandiose against the blossoming stars, atwinkle with lights and shaking with the thunder of its guns. One more magnificent seat for that great mistress of the waters who has known how to entrench herself beside the sea, on many thrones, from the grey, mist-crowned heights of Hongkong to the chalky cliffs of Dover—a thing unique in nature, and singular in its acquired majesty and power. All night we lay beneath that splendid shadow. But early next morning I was awakened, not only by a volley from British guns, but by the strains of “The Star Spangled Banner.” For a moment it was to me a dream—all this alien world in which I had been so long a wanderer. I half believed that I was only awaking again on the shores of the Hudson, where the battle-ships at anchor used to salute the morning in the days which now seemed to me so long foregone.

When I ran up on deck, I found all my fellow-passengers divided between an exchange of joyful courtesies with an American battleship next to us, and an attempt to see in the great rock which now towered and glistened athwart the morning, the profile which a life insurance company has made so familiar. But I was busy with delighted contemplation of the trim blue figures drilling aboard our neighbour. Every one of them an American! How wonderful it seemed!

A few minutes later, after the most perfunctory respects to our breakfast, we were gliding to the foot of the rock in a launch, right under the noses of the Americans, among whom some relaxation of naval rigour allowed an exchange of greetings with us, in accents deliciously Yankee. They were going in a few minutes, they said, and even before we returned, we saw them pull out and steer into the Atlantic. But we had landed at the shabby little town of Gibraltar, and were already rejoicing in the sweet April coolness of a winter that is only one long spring, and buying hyacinths and narcissus fresh with the dews of the hills of Spain. No one who has seen how these flowers, which are among us hot-house darlings, grow wild and hardy in every neglected place along the Mediterranean, inhabiting even the roofless sites of old palaces, can help breathing thereafter, in their thick perfume, a kind of distillation of dreams and old romance.

Apart from the street bouquets that breathe of more fertile fields, Gibraltar is itself almost as barren as the sea. It is an enormous mountain of naked rock, rising sheer out of the ocean, covered only with the fortifications of the British who have tunnelled deep into its heart, and planted with guns at every angle. At its foot clings a little town half Spanish, half international, with streets that resemble nothing so much in their daily life as some of the streets of the lower East Side in New York. All the typical characters are there—women with black shawls over their heads, men with curly black beards, and dirty, dark-eyed babies—and they preside over the same kind of shabby cosmopolitan little shops. Only is one reminded that this is Spain by the presence of rickety carriages painted in scarlet and yellow.

In one of these we set forth to drive around the road which ascends the rock spiralwise. It was a bright morning. The full white clouds blew through the deep blue sky like sails of ships upon the sea. To the one side we saw the coasts of Morocco,—a wall, as it seemed, before the impenetrable heart of Africa,—a fairy blue shore, delicate, glistening. Thence, in the old days, came the terrible hordes of the Moors, to enter into and possess the orange-clad slopes of Andalusia. On the other side, the mountains of Spain uplifted into the blaze of the morning their crowns of winter snow.

After breathing the ozone of those rocky heights and dazzling our eyes with the wide landscape so radiant with the light of sky and sea, we ventured across the border into Spanish territory, and became spectacles for the edification of a shabby little town whose faded pink and blue and yellow buildings were coloured like the remnants of last summer's wardrode. On the border we were greeted by a pompous soldier in the complete regalia of the days before 1914, when war was still a pageant and a pastime for gentlemen. In his long grey-blue breeches and tight coat and helmet, and all his trappings of silver and scarlet, he was the most ornamental thing on the landscape—the only thing, indeed, which did not look shabby and dusty, like the contents of a pawnshop. He let us pass with a flourish. After wandering rather forlornly, we returned the richer by two terrible spikes crusted with blood from the last bullfight thereabouts, which were sold to us for the price of several bunches of hyacinths. Finally we made our way back to the hotel, where we dined sumptuously on very white bread, very black coffee, and unlimited *hors d'œuvres*.

This was all. There was nothing else to see or do in



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A town decorated by a river that coiled and sparkled like a silver ribbon dropped from on high



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The land bore about it an indescribable air of melancholy romance

Gibraltar, though Fred did report a movie. Life dragged. Then came something worse than ennui. The Captain announced that we were stranded here indefinitely without coal. Thereupon we suggested that we start off in search of the Alhambra. Fred was prepared to be any kind of wandering troubadour in the mountains, and he and I, having long since pooled the scanty remains of our cash—the remains being mostly his—felt committed to the protection of each other. Every day we discussed what we would do if the ship should dump us here. "I will sell newspapers, and you will write them," he would say. "Thus we may eke out a romantic existence."

These were but flutters of fancy to divert my mind from graver matters. I had plenty of cause for private pessimism. I was pouring letters into the wide seas that lay between me and Japan, and naturally obtaining no answer of any sort, no assurance that they had found their way around the troubled world. It is hard for hope to subsist only on memory. And all this time, as I discovered when I got to New York, a cable was pursuing me, telling me to go to London and providing further funds. So I missed an opportunity to add one more chapter to my adventures, and to go home at last like a lady.

At last our old soaks on board took matters into their hands and made an illicit excursion into the mountains of Spain, returning with suitcases full of red and white wine, for which apparently they had exchanged the last remnants of their wits, and singing the praises of a town called Rondo, which, they averred, was the very Paradise of Omar. Whether it was the genial influence of these medicinal waters, I cannot tell, but the Captain relented and said that we too might go to Rondo but no

further. So to Rondo we set forth, Fred and I, with the chaperonage of the Red Cross and others. Strict teetotallers were we, but not uninterested in Rondo, for is not that fair mountain fortress upon the road to the Alhambra?

It was our first real release after forty days or more at sea, and we gambolled like school children as our little railway carriage climbed into the mountains. The air was cool as in very early spring, but the laden orange trees were gorgeous and golden, and the fields gay with narcissuses.

About one o'clock we came into a town that overlooked a very deep gorge filled with shadows of noon-day blue and decorated by a river which coiled and sparkled like a silver ribbon dropped from on high. After a luncheon at which we refused the draughts of Omar in favour of food which might have tempted even that old epicure, we went out to reconnoitre. Unlike the Orient, whose fabled gorgeousness one must pursue down back alleys of filth and unearth from such human and animal débris as no Occidental mind, unaided, can conceive, Spain met at once the illusions of fancy. For all the land bore about it an indescribable air of melancholy romance, of wild and lonely beauty, infertile yet not barren. It seemed like a great man's house from which the master had departed, leaving it only to servants and caretakers. We found a little Moorish palace now owned by a Spanish countess—a series of graceful little rooms with scalloped arches and roofed patios, tiled in blue and white, sunny, garden-like. It had none of the splendour, the unlimited luxury, the imperial magnificence of the Mohammedan palaces of northern India. But the architecture was similar, though on a smaller

scale, and it was all delicate, bright and lace-like, a house for ladies.

When our party returned to the hotel, we were met by a telegram. The ship, it announced, had coal and was leaving. The Captain would wait twelve hours for us and no longer. There was a wild scramble. The hotel manager came to the rescue with time-table and a lunch, which, it seemed, he had packed against this emergency, having himself read the telegram and surmised that we could not have dinner there. And thus ably seconded, we were off.

Off to the station, that is. For the train lived up to the reputation of the land and did not arrive for two mortal hours, which seemed at that time a precious fraction of our twelve. The moon swept over the hill, and all the stars began to glitter, and the night winds took possession of the silvery fields. And still the train delayed. We consoled ourselves as best we might with the hotel's delicious chicken, while I unearthed from my unconscious enough Spanish to ask for not merely coffee, but coffee *con leche*.

The train came at last; we piled into the little railway carriage, with unlimited oranges after us. And to this day that midnight career downward among the mountains of Spain remains a romantic spot in my memory. Outside the moonlight lay on the hills like snow, and we could see the orange trees, their golden burden all turned to silver, and sometimes even the tiny forms of flowers.

CHAPTER LII

SHIPWRECKED

ABOUT two o'clock we came into Algeciras, the Spanish town which faces Gibraltar, and, awaking a sleepy porter at the hotel, made him promise to call us in two hours and fortify us with coffee. Next morning we opened our eyes on a grey and windy dawn. All around there was a stir and roar, as of winds howling through all the hollows of the earth, and seas reverberating on every shore. After a breakfast of rolls and coffee, we found the launch that was to take us to the ship. The harbour was seething, and the captain of the launch was no more serene than the weather. It wasn't his habit, he said, to go out on a day like this, and it was bad policy for a ship to brave such an ocean. You had to take a sea like that if it caught you in the midst of a voyage, but it wasn't wise for creatures born without fins to court it. But the ship's orders were that we must come across, if we were to share in her immediate departure. So we started. In a moment I was sick unto death. All the seven seas of the world had not yet prepared me for that terrible vertigo.

Through it all I soon gathered that Fred was supporting me with his arm; that we were endeavouring to keep from crashing into the ship which was tossing on the waves, as helpless, it seemed, as an empty walnut-shell; and that the only safe way of getting us up was by letting down a rope ladder from the decks. One by

one the rest were pulled up—I being left to the last as the helpless and fainting member. Then some one spoke to me; there was a rope around my waist; and, while the winds and waters and gray skies whirled round me like dizzy wheels, some one put a rope in my hand and told me to climb. And then out of that wreck of consciousness, some old arboreal instinct revived within me, and half fainting as I was, I went up over the side of the ship, swinging over the tossing waters like a monkey, and fainted again at the top.

When I really came to, we were out upon the howling Atlantic, a helpless prey, it seemed, to winds and seas. For days the tumult continued, and I lay prone. Then peace fell like a caress upon the waters. There came calm blue days and a breath of the tropics. We were sliding along near the Azores, over a sea that was like a quiet pool, calm, misty, languid. Then, for the first time, I had a chance to see what modifications Gibraltar had made in our list of passengers. A welcome modification, too! For we had picked up twenty young American naval officers, who had seen hard service in the Mediterranean. They were lads of all degrees of social and intellectual attainment, who shared but one thing in common, the sense of insufferable ennui. They had seen some of the hardest service of the war in the Mediterranean waters, and among all the haunts of the submarines, and though their task had been at least a comparatively cleanly one—tolerably free from mud and cooties—it had had its own peculiar horrors, in the peculiar nervousness of destroyer service and the loneliness of that watchful cruise upon the sea.

I had little time to investigate these new additions to our society, however, because the battle of wind and sea

once more began. We had turned north now, and it was bitterly cold. Our ship had no heat, and most of us were inured to the tropics. I lay below with all my wardrobe piled on top of me, resigned to what seemed my prospects of ending my mortal span.

Once a wave crashed through and deluged me. Some one came and doctored the porthole, and said the whole ship was wet, and went away. Some one else dipped up the salt water in which all my property was swimming, and an Indian boy followed and mopped up. I got off the worst of my wet things, wrapped myself in the comparative warmth of a steamer rug which was also wet, but which, being of wool, seemed by comparison dry. Then being too sick to stand, I moved over to the little couch which had escaped the deluge, and settled down, with the utmost nonchalance, to my misery. About dusk, Fred came to my door, very still, very grave and subdued.

"It is all right now," he said.

"All right?" I asked feebly.

"Yes. We have been wrecked."

I thought of desert islands and *Robinson Crusoe* and then despairingly of Japan.

Fred proceeded to give comforting particulars. Oh, yes, we could limp along and get into Boston. Only part of the decks were washed away; some of the seamen had been carried overboard and left to die in the waves; a lot of the others were laid up with fractured bones; and the salt water was all over our food so that we should have to survive on tea and crackers. The navy had done yeoman service through it all, and had inspired everybody with confidence they did not feel in the original personnel of the ship. And he drew a dramatic pic-

ture of them all huddled together aloft, when the captain had been ready to give us up, in momentary expectation of going down, while I had lain below in the unique security of being too seasick to care.

This was the last real event of the voyage. We were heading now for Boston, wirelessly the while an announcement of our troubles and a request for ambulances. At dawn the next morning we were dumped on our own shores.

For some days I was a foreigner in my own land. My clothes were odd, and my accent pronounced to be "English," and my social customs had to be refitted into the schedules of busy America. But as I slipped back into the old ways, I discovered that the path around the world was still a part of my life. All along the way, I had poured letters into the wide seas which are the only road to Japan. Where they went to I cannot tell, but they lost themselves, many of them, en route. As for replies, I seemed always to flee before them, like Gabriel before Evangeline. But after I reached New York, letters from Japan began to arrive, forwarded from everywhere. Now all the world loves a lover, but the world as a geographical entity is not so cordial, and it began to seem as if the vastness and roundness of this terrestrial globe, the sheer quantity of the earth and salt water that may lie between human hearts, bade fair to wreck my dearest plans. No letters of mine had arrived in Japan for some time. The conclusions were obvious. The epistles that did get through, being written at such diverse dates, complicated misunderstandings. In vain I protested. A protest grows cold in such long transit. I cabled, and the cables got stuck in mid-ocean. I cursed time and space and the largeness of the world.

At last came a desperate and resolute letter from Sydney saying that he had resigned his job and had taken passage on the first ship leaving harbour, and he was coming the other way around the world to find me.

And he did.

THE END

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